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Parents, Too, Are Concerned With their Children's Reading

AS WE CONSIDER the question "Where are we going in reading?" we must also consider the parents. For the influence of the parents is tremendous. With their help and support we may be able to go far in the reading program. Without their help, progress is likely to be limited.

There is ample evidence that parents are deeply concerned about their children's reading. Some of it shows a keen, constructive interest. Some of it shows deep-seated anxieties that at times burst forth in violent protest and pressures.

Certainly one of the jobs of the teacher is to work sympathetically with parents to explain the school situation and to learn more about home influences and opportunities.

Recently I have interviewed a number of parents, asking them about their children's reading. I found all of them ready to talk and ask questions. Their queries seem to group themselves under four major questions:

1. How is reading being taught in school today?
2. How can I help my child increase his skill in reading?
3. How can I help him enjoy his reading so that he wants to read?
4. What books can I recommend for his age level and interests?

To answer such questions many schools are providing for individual

parent conferences, for group discussion, and for demonstration lessons before parents. They are preparing mimeographed or printed letters, pamphlets and handbooks to be sent home to explain the reading program. A few school systems have used television.

Probably there are many other plans for successful public relations programs about reading. Certainly there is need for parent help if reading is to become a rich experience for every child.

While school-wide efforts to reach parents have proved very effective, the real responsibility must rest with the individual teacher. She alone can give a firsthand report about Johnny's reading in school.

Nancy Larrick

New Editor Appointed

Dr. Allen J. Figurel has been appointed editor of *THE READING TEACHER* and Publications Chairman of the I.C.I.R.I. for the school year 1954-55. Dr. Figurel is a graduate of the University of Pittsburgh where he is a member of the staff of the Reading Laboratory. He is also principal of one of the elementary schools of the city of Pittsburgh.

Dr. Figurel succeeds Nancy Larrick who has served as editor for the past four years.

Parents and the Reading Program

by Daisy M. Jones

Director, Elementary Education
Richmond, Indiana

THE THEME, "Parents and the Reading Program," points up the important part to be played by the parent in the home if the child is to become a good reader capable of using this important skill for information and recreation throughout life. Through their attitudes as well as through co-operation, parents can help their children succeed in reading. Co-workers with the parents on this undertaking are the teachers and the librarians.

Yet in many instances these potential co-workers have never pooled their information and resources, have never planned a joint approach to the problem. Parents have sometimes been apathetic about the situation because they felt it was up to the teachers to teach. Teachers have sometimes discouraged those parents who have come with questions and offers of help.

In any case, the child is being influenced at home as well as at school. His attitude toward reading is being affected by the attitudes and habits of his parents. His feeling of assurance may be molded in large part outside of school.

If his parents find delight in reading, he is likely to think of reading as something that is desirable and enjoyable. If his parents are pushing him beyond his capacities, he may build

up a resentment that slows down his reading progress at school.

The direction and effectiveness of the home influence may depend in large part to the degree to which parents become an effective part of the reading program.

On the following pages five articles present different aspects of this important subject.

Dr. Helen Grayum delves into research and psychology to identify attitudes and show how they affect the child and his reading. Miss Olive R. Bean gives some practical examples of home-school cooperation in the sharing of responsibilities for attitudes, pupil growth and adjustment, and curriculum development. Miss Helen R. Cook offers some specific suggestions to parents who want to help and are not sure what to do. Dr. Mark Murfin relates the school reading program to the summer program in reading and calls on the home and the library to help carry out the concrete ideas he describes. Mrs. Harriet E. Bard identifies the library and the librarian in relation to use of books and illustrates the idea of getting the right book for the right child.

While the theme "Parents and the Reading Program" indicates that this symposium is directed to parents in particular, it is of equal significance to teachers and librarians who have a vital part to play in the program.

How Parents' Attitudes Affect Children's Reading

by *Helen S. Grayum*
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WHAT TEACHER or parent has not been startled by the swiftness and precision with which his feelings and moods, or attitudes—sometimes defined vaguely even to himself—have been caught and responded to by children? A gesture, a facial expression, a tone of voice, a word said or left unsaid can reveal approval or annoyance, interest or boredom, pride or disappointment.

Children comprehend unmistakably that, in school, reading is an important activity in the day's proceedings. For some, on the first day of school, reading already holds an established and cherished place in the day's routine; others wistfully "look on"; still others care not at all for the effort. Already attitudes toward reading have been planted. As children grow older, the extent of divergence and intensity of their feelings about reading increases. Furthermore, in the course of growing up, their attitudes may change, as experiences broaden and interests change. Adults, generally, cling tenaciously to their feelings about reading—about what to read, when, why, how, and even whether to read at all, or how much. But how are these attitudes, or feelings, developed? How are they conceived? What complexities of circumstances contribute to their beginning and their nurture?

Let us look more closely at the meaning of the word "attitude." It is

often used comprehensively and therefore loosely. It is a convenient tab for much in reading that is misunderstood or not understood at all. In reality, attitudes are complex and little understood. Psychologists conclude that attitudes are learned attractions or repulsions felt quite automatically because of the meaning which they hold for an individual. Attitudes and beliefs are closely related. They are, in a sense, patterns of meaning, Betts pointed out that attitudes are the core of personality; Rivlin has added significantly that these "learned likes and dislikes often make the difference between success and failure, and determine largely the way an individual lives his life." Serious difficulties are encountered in research on specific attitudes: chiefly difficulty in isolating the factors for study.

What Affects Parents' Attitudes?

In a consideration of the question of how parents' attitudes affect children's reading it is essential that clear-cut distinctions be made between the findings of research, and opinion or supposition. There has been much discussion about procedure and practice which, it is believed, should be desirable. There is also a limited quantity of valuable fact in this area. The available data may be classified broadly into three inter-related groups,

namely (1) home environment, (2) home and school relationships, and (3) emotional aspects.

It should be remembered, of course, that not all the conclusions concerning attitudes necessarily apply equally to all children. The application of the data is not so simple as that; combinations of factors operate. The development, effect, and manifestation of attitudes in reading vary among individuals in kaleidoscopic design. Therefore, data concerning the attitudes of a certain child should be used against a much more comprehensive background of information. While, in certain instances of surveys of reading progress, the attitudes of parents or children, or both, have been used as a blanket excuse for poor reading, in other instances this factor appears to have been neglected. Both teachers and parents need to be sensitive to the possible role of attitudes in children's reading.

Home Environment. Environment has long been considered an important factor in affecting children's attitudes toward reading. Monroe and Backus (1) reached this conclusion in 1931 when they stated that children reflect the attitudes and interests of their parents. The availability of pertinent information in this area would be useful to teachers in guiding children's reading. It is unusual, indeed, for children to accept admonition, and advice from parents which they themselves do not portray in practice. Furthermore, it has been shown (5) that methods of encouragement of reading used by adults affected individual children differently.

Wollner in a study of *Children's*

Voluntary Reading as an Expression of Individuality (5), expanded the concept of environment described above by Monroe and Backus, and concluded, "It is generally agreed that pupils' environment affects their voluntary reading habits and attitudes." The following aspects of the environment were observed: education of the parents, their present careers and leisure pursuits, standard of living which concentrated on educational achievement, prestige value placed on the number of books read—perhaps in imitation of parents and teachers, number of museums and theaters visited, skill in an art, and achievement in studies. In such surroundings the motivations to acquire unusual interest and skill in the use of reading material were present.

Wollner also added to our knowledge of the effect of certain aspects of the environment on attitudes in reading, by indicating the relation of early experiences in reading to later attitudes. Fifty-five eighth-grade students of superior reading ability participated in the study. The socioeconomic level of the families was high. All the parents were readers—that is, they read more than an "average" amount. The home libraries were unusually large. Evidence was found to support the generalization that reading interests are related to early associations and experiences with reading. Approximately ninety percent of the subjects reported that they had enjoyed being read to; nine percent found it dull. Similar numbers, respectively, had found learning to read "exciting" or "pleasant," and difficult.

A complementary investigation (3) indicated that children who have had little association with reading reveal less desire to learn to read. College students who were poor readers reported a dearth of reading material in the home, little interest in learning to read, and little recreational reading at any time.

An intensive study of *Why Children Fail in Reading* by Robinson (3) pointed out—more distinctly than previous studies had done—the importance of the emotional tone in the home as a factor in affecting children's reading. It is implied that an unhappy home situation, fraught with worry, tension, and poor family relationships, stultifies interest and progress in reading. Monroe and Backus suggested that economic insecurity rather than economic status might be a cause of reading failure. This underscores the importance of a stable, wholesome home environment upon a child's total adjustment.

Home and School Relationships. Monroe and Backus reported that cooperation between the home and the school was important in order to prevent antagonism toward the school and its activities. As in the case of poor home relationships, described above, the implication is that poor home and school relationships may affect the child's achievement in school, including reading.

A recent study by Murfin (2) is pertinent to this topic. It dealt with *The Expressed Attitudes of Children from Two Socio-Economic Levels, and the Relationship to Intelligence and Reading Achievement*. The following aspects were surveyed: (1)

school and teachers, (2) intellectual and cultural refinements, (3) ambitions and occupational goals, (4) restrictions of freedom, and (5) parental attitudes toward education. It was found that, "The two schools were most similar in their attitudes toward school and teachers, and differed most significantly in regard to parental interest, and in support of the school. Pupils from the lower school reported more often the absence of parental interest in the school program, less cooperation with the school, and more conflict between the home and the school. Thus home environment and home and school relationships have certain similar features which may affect the attitudes of children toward reading in similar ways.

Emotional Aspects. The emotional content of attitudes is powerful. On no other aspect of the subject under consideration is more sound information available. Yet surprisingly poor judgment is sometimes practiced in dealing with the emotional aspects of learning to read. Harmful effects may result from the parents' sincere concern that the child progress in reading according to certain standards, or his failure to do so. But in their own feeling of urgency for the "success" of their child, parents may forget the place which attitudes hold in the process of learning or may regard such a consideration as "soft." This is illustrated by the anxiety parents often express, to have their children "learn to read" by a certain time, and "pass" every year regardless of mental, physical, emotional, and social development. Sometimes parents are unresponsive to their child's being placed

in any reading group except "the best"—unreceptive to differentiated instruction until a reading problem is apparent.

It has been observed that a stable, wholesome home environment exerts a definite influence on the school progress of the child. Thus is implied a home in which confidence in the child is evident, initiative and self-direction are encouraged, effective social relationships are experienced, and success is recognized. Studies have shown that learning is facilitated when the following conditions prevailed: (1) the motivation was pleasant, (2) the subject had been successful, and (3) the subject had been praised. On the other hand, learning was impeded by these conditions: (1) indifferent or unpleasant association, (2) failure and frustration, (3) shame and reproof. Especially disconcerting is an experience in which a child who has been a happy member of the family group suddenly finds his status completely changed—upon encountering difficulty in reading. He may find he is being considered abnormal, odd, or "not quite right." It is suggested that such labeling by parents indicate their inability to accept the fact. In actual situations the problem is often further enhanced by one child's "failure" being contrasted with the "success" of another child in the family or in the neighborhood.

Under these circumstances the chances of success diminish, and undesirable personality traits inevitably result in some form, such as fearfulness and withdrawal, or antagonism and domination. These resultant reactions in personality can grow to the

extent of the individual's becoming a problem from an adjustment standpoint. He may even come to enjoy the concern he has caused and the attention thus secured. A significant and revealing characteristic of such children, however, is their tendency to show fatigue at the slightest mental exertion. It may indicate, in part, the amount of nervous energy expended in working at a task which has many unpleasant associations. When strong emotions are experienced frequently and over a long period of time, physical as well as mental health may be affected.

The Child's Attitudes

Whether by the home environment and home and school relationships or through emotional conditioning, the attitudes of parents do affect their children's reading in various ways and in varying degrees. As Witty has stated (4), "Learning to read has no clear starting point—or stopping point. It is a gradual process that actually starts long before the child enters school and begins reading." Thus, much responsibility appears to have been assigned justly to the parents.

In terms of the specific ways in which parents' attitudes affect children's reading, several concepts are of major importance in guiding the development of this ability. Children imitate adult behavior. If reading in the home is an essential part of living, young children play learning to read, and accept it as readily as learning to put on their shoes. They cannot be expected to do otherwise. Since reading is an activity which permeates our

lives, it must not be thought of as pertaining primarily to school procedures.

The values placed upon reading by adults have a marked impression upon children's attitudes: The selection, care, use, and worth ascribed to books; interest in reading for different purposes—for pleasure, for keeping "up-to-date," and for "finding out;" sharing what is read by passing on the story, discussion, and reading aloud.

The child's early experience with reading should be pleasant and satisfying. Since attitudes do strongly affect children's reading, deliberate consideration of the development of favorable attitudes is not only justified, but wise, and the possibility of aversion prevented. For young children the chief purpose of reading is pleasure. If it is not fun, why listen, and much less, why want to learn to read independently? Witty (4) has pointed out that "children who discover very early that reading can be fun very seldom have trouble in learning to read."

The reading environment is important. Appropriate time and place must be provided regularly for reading. A variety of suitable materials should be at hand to fit the occasion and the mood. A feeling of comfort and of rapport among the persons participating are important mental associations in the reading activity.

A wealth of experiences helps to prepare a child for satisfactory independent reading. First-hand contacts and observations should be discussed and ideas exchanged to broaden general interests and extend vocabulary.

Caution is advised in the methods used in guiding the selection of reading material in an effort to develop "good taste." Basic needs of children must be recognized, as well as the fact that reading interests can and do change. With broad general interests it is assumed that desirable tastes in reading will find their way.

For these achievements the home and the school must work hand in hand, with mutual understanding and confidence. The development of means for working together to achieve this common goal is a challenge.

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Teachers and Parents Cooperate on Children's Reading

by Olive R. Bean

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TODAY's teacher enlists the cooperation of the parents in the learning process because she knows there are no persons more vitally interested in each child than the parents.

Since reading is considered basic in the educational program, it is wise to begin here in our cooperative endeavor. Attention is focused on the child as a joint responsibility.

To facilitate parental help with reading, teachers have undertaken many and varied approaches.

Keeping Parents Informed

One kindergarten teacher had a meeting of parents during the first few weeks of school to interpret to parents the purposes behind many of the activities which are a part of the kindergarten program. She encouraged the parents to help the children bring something worthwhile to share at least once a week. By sharing experiences and showing interesting objects, the children of a class were together broadening their total background of experiences. This, in turn, will help the children in their reading.

The kindergarten teacher encouraged the parent to allow the child to turn the pages of the book which the parent reads to him. She explained that two or three things can be accomplished: the child practices the left to right sequence, learns to handle

a book, and acquires a love of what can come from a book. She pointed out that the ability of the child to respond rhythmically bears a relation to phrasing smoothly in reading. She explained how working in small groups is a readiness experience for group work in reading. This kindergarten teacher had her parents working with her because they understood.

A first-grade teacher gave a readiness test to the children. The teacher, principal, and supervisor talked about the advisability of sharing this information with the parents. It was decided to invite the mothers to come one afternoon. Each mother was given her child's test. The purposes of such a test were explained. The interpretations of the different sections were carefully presented. The standardization was explained. The evaluation purposes of the test were discussed. The suggested grouping was accepted because of the tangible evidence at hand. Those parents have been on hand practically every time they think there is something new to be learned about their children.

Many teachers give parents a greater opportunity to see their children at work by inviting the parents of a particular reading group one day and continuing until all parents have been invited. Fathers have been known to make arrangements to be present on

that day. The teacher tries to do things in as normal a fashion as possible, perhaps giving more time to the group whose parents are visiting. The teacher not only follows her regular teaching procedures, but she may digress from working with the children to explain to parents what the objective is, why she is using this method, and what she hopes the outcome may be. The teacher has a responsibility to two groups of learners: her pupils and the invited parents.

As part of a get-acquainted note at the first of the year, one teacher included this phrase, "If you will send word the day before you plan to visit and the time you can spend in school, I shall make certain that you can see your child working in his group." Parents frequently praised her personal interest in the children and went away feeling the teacher was making a real effort to work for the children's good.

The filmstrips which have been developed as a part of a particular reading program were purchased for the first-grade room. The principal was intrigued by this new method. He invited the first-grade teacher to give a demonstration lesson at the P.T.A. This teacher welcomed the opportunity to interpret to the parents what was being done in school.

Sample readers for each level in the elementary school were displayed during American Education Week. These included samples of the very old readers and the very new. Captions were printed and included with the display to show the approximate date of the use of each book. The development or evolution of text material in read-

ing was self-evident. Such things as type, pictures, content, format, etc., were the talk of the parents on the open house night. These remarks were common: "Wouldn't it be interesting to read such books as they have now?" or, "Aren't our children lucky?"

To show parents how reading is taught today, the P.T.A. president asked four teachers to prepare short demonstrations around the theme of word analysis. The grade distribution ranged from kindergarten through the second year. The kindergarten group demonstrated auditory discrimination through identification of pictures and finding the ones which rhymed. Another set of pictures was used to note likenesses of word beginnings.

The beginning first-year children talked about a picture and read the story underneath. Then they made up a story using words they could read. A second-year class made new words by adding endings to words they already knew. An advanced second-year group took their seats when the letter with which their name began was called by the teacher in alphabetical order. The parents were very much interested in these demonstrations.

Sharing Responsibility

In almost every group of children, there will be one or two who do not progress or succeed as well as they should. Sometimes parents are anxious to help, and it is important to explain how they can be most constructive.

A parent may say, "My child just

doesn't care to read. Should I make him read his library book? Should I still read aloud to my child?" These are common questions for which there is no one answer. There are some guides we can suggest to parents. Sometimes the reason a child does not read is that there is no time or place for him to read. Maybe the television and radio never have a silent moment. Perhaps Mother and Daddy never set the stage themselves. An environment conducive to leisure reading could be set. An opportunity to share the reading can become a part of the normal exchange. One family goes regularly each week to the library after the groceries are purchased to get books suited to the pleasure of each member of the family. Some parents will tell you how interesting children's books are. They wait until Mary gets to a certain point before they talk about it; they guess how the story will end; maybe Sonny reads the exciting part aloud to Mother as she irons. Yet parents should know too much oral reading may slow down the rate, decrease accuracy of interpretation, and cause the child to form the habit of verbalizing even in silent reading.

With a child who is having difficulty, parents can help in the same way the teacher does. They can ask a lead-on question for a paragraph which the child is going to read silently. After the child has read silently, they can have him read aloud what the dog did. They can help the child scan the material to find unfamiliar words. All of this presupposes a co-operative parent.

A list of reading skills particularly

appropriate to the grade level is usually welcomed by parents. They can be studied at a room parents' meeting. Boys and girls can evaluate themselves with the list. The teacher can use the list as a means of evaluation under two headings: "Does Well" and "Needs Help."

Teachers frequently wonder what use should be made of a score from a standardized test when it comes to interpretation to parents. Some teachers have a parents' meeting and explain the results, protecting the pride of both the child and the parent. They point out growth by comparison with the last test given. They point out specific individual and group needs. There is nothing to hide in saying, "Our entire group needs work on vocabulary," or "Our group on the whole did well on interpretation." This is a means by which a parent can see his child in another relationship.

There are some dangers to this of course. The wrong kinds of pressures can result. Parents might send off for tests when they get their fingers on a sample. Unfair comparisons can be made. Nevertheless, the skill of the teacher in the presentation and in helping parents to set the right kind of goals will further the educational understanding.

The room news which many teachers send from the school to the home usually contains some information about what is being done in reading. It may tell the stories which were read. This in turn becomes a subject of conversation in the home. For children to retell the story at home helps to develop the skill of getting

sequence of ideas, of retention of important facts, of vocabulary usage, and of a pleasure in reliving an experience. The newsletter may say that we have found that we know many new words since we learned to add "d" and "ed" to some words we already know. Here are some of the words: play—played, bake—baked. This is a means of reemphasizing for the child as well as an interpretation to the parent.

More and more, the parents are being included in curriculum develop-

ment. It is not so much that they provide the professional leadership, but that they are a part of this total process. Some will do an enormous amount of reading, will help you compile related reading, and do some of the clerical work.

In a great proportion of our schools today, the welcome mat is out. Parents feel they are a part of the ongoing process because teachers are including them in the planning and development of the total school program.

Helping Parents Help Their Children

*by Helen R. Cook
Educational Consultant
Scott, Foresman Co.
Chicago, Illinois*

ONE OF the most frequent questions that parents ask teachers is, "How can I help my child with reading?" They ask because they want to help but are not always sure just what to do.

Today, perhaps more than ever before, parents want their children to become good readers and good thinkers, believing the two to be synonymous. Parents and teachers both agree that most children want to read and all children need to read. That ability is required of them for good living in our modern world. The person who cannot read is frustrated at almost all levels. We depend on reading to do our work, for our information, and for our pleasure. Children must be able to do more than asso-

ciate sound and meaning with printed words. If reading is to make the contribution to the life of the child that it should, the child will grow through his reading as well as in his ability to read.

Growth in and through reading comes as the child projects himself into story situations, shares the characters' moods and emotions, and creates sensory images so vivid that responding to printed words becomes in reality a process of experiencing. Interpretation reaches this level only when the child, as he reads or as he listens to someone read aloud, calls up specific sensory images that stimulate responses approximating those he would have if he were actually parti-

cipating in the story event.

As the child grows in reading ability, reading becomes a vital part of his everyday life. Books open a new world to him. Books are no substitute for living, but they will add immeasurably to the richness of living, providing what the child reads is meaningful to him. We can not experience all things first-hand, but we can experience many things vicariously through books if we are able to comprehend, react, and integrate the things we read into our own lives.

Therefore, our goal is to make reading "come alive" for children—to help them ask themselves, "What is there in this story for me? What have I learned that I didn't know before? What ideas have I gained that I can use in everyday living?"

How Can the Parent Help?

Reading readiness begins before the child enters school. Long before the age of six he may have watched his parents read newspapers, magazines and books. He may have explored these same materials, until the parent, if only in self-defense, has showered him with books of his own. This is as it should be.

Looking at colored picture books, turning pages and listening to stories while sitting on the lap of an adult, are all a part of the normal day of the young child. He discovers at this early age that reading is the act of looking at and getting ideas from a book. He finds it a satisfying and enjoyable experience, and many times during the day he will bring a book with his request, "Read." He entertains himself by looking at picture

books and can often be heard talking to a beloved storybook character. Reading is "coming alive" to him even at this early age.

He learns that books have pages to turn; some pages are more interesting than others, and one must search to locate specific pages. Pages must be turned carefully or else they tear. There is an up and down to each page. (In the beginning he may walk around the book to see the picture in place of turning it.) These are all readiness skills for formal reading and so should be encouraged.

Children love to have adults read to them and will ask again and again to hear a favorite story. Hearing an adult read makes reading seem easy. Unconsciously the child gets the impression that if Dad and Mother can read like that, it can't be so hard after all. A child who has grown up in a home where someone reads aloud acquires a "homey approach" to reading and looks forward to the time when he will be able to read. He brings that confidence and eagerness to school.

The young child readily memorizes the story and will insist that it be read verbatim. He loves that feeling of familiarity and does not want a word substituted or a paragraph condensed. The four- and five-year-old will stop the reader with questions of "Why?" or "What for?" He likes explanations of everything that he sees or hears. This is normal curiosity and an explanation should be given. It should be remembered that a child's curiosity is quite varied and extensive but not very deep. He wants to know a little about a lot of things but not very

much about any one thing.

Parents can help by reading to their children every day and many times during the day. Teachers will do well to advise them to continue the story session after the child enters school, yes, even through high school. Many times a child will willingly leave his play for a needed rest if he knows his mother will read him a story. A story at bedtime not only has a quieting effect, but also it is a cherished memory as the child grows into adulthood.

As the child "reads" his picture stories, he is building his oral vocabulary. This is most important. The first-grade child must not be attempting to read words that are strange to his ears as well as to his eyes. The words that he reads should be within his speaking vocabulary, and as he tells about the pictures and stories he is increasing this oral vocabulary. Parents can help him to express himself and put his thoughts into words.

They can also see that as the child reads a series of pictures he should be reading them from left to right. In a series of pictures, he should see that one leads into the next and there is no break in the continuity of the story. Words must join together to make the thought unit. This helps him to develop his eye span and fluency in reading—two very important reading skills.

Children enjoy coloring and should color large objects since their large muscles are better developed than the small muscles. Parents can encourage a child to stay within the lines of the object. If after much practice he is still unable to do so, they can suggest that he be given larger objects to trace

around to help establish eye and hand coordination. There should be good eye and hand coordination before he attempts to write.

Not only should the small child be surrounded by books, but children of all ages should live in this atmosphere. Exposure to a variety of good books is one of the strongest incentives to reading for oneself. There is no substitute in the home for the book corner with its low table, child-size bookshelves, and comfortable chairs.

The Family Reading Hour

A good topic for a mother's meeting might be the values to be gained by a family reading period. Many profitable and enjoyable evenings can be spent with each member of the family reading his respective reading material—father his paper, mother a magazine, Johnny a library book, and Junior his storybooks. Good family relationships are established through a shared reading period with all taking turns. If all members of the group are able to read, this may be a shared book or each member may read his own story—yes, even little Charley who "reads" his pictures. During this shared period parents will want to keep these things in mind:

1. Encourage the child to be prepared—read his story to himself before he reads to others. Silent reading should always precede oral reading.
2. Remember that reading is a process of getting thought from the printed page. When the child does not know a word, tell him what it is so he doesn't forget what he is reading.
3. Take time to explain to him the

meaning of unfamiliar words.

4. Always be a good listener by sitting quietly and enjoying what is being read rather than the way in which it is being done. Sit in an easy chair, relax, look pleasant, really listen, show real interest and give lots of praise.

5. Mother is probably the child's most willing listener. Mending, ironing, knitting, peeling potatoes—these are all good "listening chores."

6. If there are younger children in the family, make it a privilege for them to hear an older brother or sister read.

7. Expand the child's interest by telling or reading stories. Some children demand fairy tales and more fairy tales, or horse stories and more horse stories. A grown-up can introduce them to better examples of their favorite sort of reading and gradually lead them into other fields and subjects.

8. Try reading aloud and telling stories. This helps the children reduce the lag between ability to read for oneself and capacity to understand and enjoy literature. There is usually a one- to three-year difference between reading skill and level of appreciation.

What Else Besides Books?

What can the home do besides surrounding the child with books, reading to him, and sharing stories, poems, and pictures?

It can help him to live a rich, full, and satisfying life at each stage of his growth and to achieve the best possible all-around development physically, mentally, socially, emotionally.

A child who is not well physically

has little energy for learning. Those "childhood diseases" that may have seemed so mild often leave their serious effects. Measles may have left eyes weakened; scarlet fever may have left a hearing loss; and polio, even though the child has apparently recovered, causes him to tire so easily that he requires more than the usual rest periods. Parents should see that their children are in the best physical condition before school begins and keep the teacher informed concerning the illnesses of the child so that she will be alert to his physical needs.

Children need affection as well as nourished bodies. Like all of us they need love, a feeling of emotional security and a feeling of belonging. Children are most concerned with their parents. Because they love them, they want to please them and try to do what they ask. Parents should not expect too much, for children need and work for praise and approval. Parental relationship with children should never be, "You be good and I'll love you." Making love conditional on good behavior or achievement is an unfortunate emphasis. Mothers and fathers should be the people on whom the child can rely to stand by to give affection, no matter how well or how poorly he does. The child who has the right kind of affection at home brings to school an emotional stability. That child is better able to give his attention to learning.

Youngsters also need emotional security. They have this security when they feel that all is well—that they are protected and cared for and equal to the demands that life or adults make. The child who is emotionally

safe and secure will be serene and happy as he meets the many experiences that school offers.

Every child must have a feeling of belonging to the family group. Children know they belong when they contribute to family life—not only to the family chores, but when they are a part of the family council; when a sympathetic adult will lend an ear to what they have to say, and when they share in the happy events that go on in the family. Shared occasions help the child realize that families have roots and that “belonging” has advantages. Belonging to a family group helps him to come to school knowing how to get along with others. Knowing how to share, to respect the rights of others, and to “take turns” helps him to adjust to the school environment, thus releasing his energies for school work.

There is much that the family can do to help the child besides helping him with his lessons. Trips to the country, to the city, to the zoo, to the circus, and to the homes of friends are all worthwhile experiences for the child. They not only make him more interesting to others, as he shares these experiences, but they make him more interesting to himself by giving him a variety of things to think about. There is much to be said for the Sunday drives into the country, the autumn nut hunt, the popcorn and candy evenings and the Thanksgiving dinners at Grandmother's. These activities still hold much for the child.

Answering Parents' Questions

Many times teachers are asked, “Should I teach my child his ABC's

before he enters school?” How will you answer the parent without discouraging his efforts? Tell him, “It is not necessary. Your child will be taught the letters of the alphabet, but he will learn them as they fall in relationship to the other letters, using a functional attack rather than a rote attack.”

Others will ask, “Should I teach him to print his name?” Again tell them, “It is not necessary but if you do, please remember, not all capital letters! The teacher must then change an established habit and this is difficult for the child.”

Another inquiry is, “How can we help when our child enters school?” The best answer to this is, “Take an interest in his school activities. Get to know his teacher.”

This little story is significant:

Johnny, after a few weeks of school came home one day and said to his mother, “Mommy, do you know my teacher?”

“No, dear, Mommy hasn't met her yet. You know how busy Mommy has been.”

“Mommy, you don't know my teacher?” (And with a little sigh he spoke words of great wisdom.) “Then how you both goin't bring me up?”

A common question is, “Should parents hear their child's reading lessons at home?” In general, parents do not need to supplement the classroom work unless the teachers ask them to and provide specific suggestions. If the child takes his reader home, he should read only the stories the teacher has developed at school. He will enjoy sharing those stories because he can read them well.

Try to establish a feeling of mutual confidence between the school and the home, between the parent and the teacher. Both the teacher and the parent are eager for the child to succeed with reading. Both want the

best for the child. And remember, we have more children succeeding with reading, and more really competent readers, than ever before. Children are growing through their reading as well as in their ability to read.

Summer Reading Needs Parents' Support

*by Mark Murfin
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THE PRESENCE or absence of a planned summer reading program for children in the elementary school reflects to some degree the philosophy of the teacher and the school system.

In thousands of our public schools each June teachers collect the readers, wrap them carefully to protect them from dust or put them away in the cupboards. In effect they say to their youngsters, "Now you've had it. Reading is over until next September."

Actually the modern school and the best teachers recognize the potential of fostering summer reading. For to them reading is a functional process which should operate outside the classroom in life-like, natural, everyday situations. Such a school capitalizes on the leisure-time reading of youngsters during the summer months in an effort to: (1) build increased reading power, (2) provide wide and varied experiences for the child which will contribute to future learning situations, and (3) help the home pro-

vide wholesome, worthwhile leisure-time activities. Any one of these objectives justifies a program which fosters summer reading for youngsters.

More and more educators are coming to realize the potentialities of a planned summer reading program for children who are learning to read.

The success of a summer reading program depends upon the school-home relationship which has been engendered during the regular school year. When parents have visited the school through the winter and conferred about children's reading, they will be more interested in a summer program.

The nature of the summer reading program for children will depend upon the local situation. Some communities have such adequate public libraries with well-trained personnel that fostering summer reading may be only a matter of acquainting parents and children with the program through bulletins, visits to the library,

talks by librarians, and the local press. Teachers in these communities may strengthen the program by considering with the child and the parents some of the very information which has been found so useful in the classroom. In the last parent-teacher conference of the year or by letter to the home, it is possible to discuss the child's reading needs, weaknesses, interests, and strengths. An honest and frank appraisal of the child's progress and a suggested list of easy library books to meet the level and interest of the child are always welcomed by the parent. One teacher uses a mimeographed suggested list of books compiled by the children in her intermediate grade. The teacher groups the children's selection of good books according to reading difficulty. From the children's classroom records, each home receives a book list which reports the books the child has read during the school year and suggests the level of summer reading the child should pursue in vacation months.

Some districts are not so fortunate as to have public library facilities. In such localities it is indeed difficult to justify the common practice of school administrators of locking up the school library in June. If manpower is lacking or the budget will not permit the payment of summer help to circulate school library books, then books may be packaged in groups of five or ten selected books to be taken home by the child in June and returned to school in September. Small children are delighted to have their own summer library of easy books selected for their own reading level. A letter to the parents explaining the

project will aid the reading program and insure the return of books in September. Certainly it's better to clear the school library shelves during the summer months so that books can be put into the hands of youngsters to enjoy.

In Alton, Illinois, when the city library funds ran short, the school system operated libraries within the educational facilities of the public schools. School libraries were made available to children and adults, and in schools which did not have libraries, the kindergarten rooms functioned as summer libraries. According to the public school library supervisor, "The reaction of the public has been so enthusiastic that next summer it is planned to have additional school libraries open."

The Alton plan was created to meet the local emergency, but it suggests the possibility of future experiments and projects to utilize school libraries to foster summer reading on the part of the children we teach. The free reading by youngsters of easy interesting books during summer vacation may well become the core of an extended eleven or twelve-month school term. In the culture of our time the school may aid in coping with the problem of juvenile delinquency and in helping children with a wiser use of leisure time by the use of school library materials on a twelve month basis. The school that purports to be modern and understanding of the problems of teaching children to read cannot defend the position of keeping beautiful books lifeless on shelves in summer months.

The devices or mechanics of oper-

ating a summer reading program vary to meet the needs of the local situation and the facilities that are available. Certainly they should function within a framework of these basic beliefs:

1. Reading for children should be a real life activity in which they participate in and enjoy books.

2. Library reading should be easy and with the vocabulary difficulty on or below the reading level of the child.

3. Parents should work so closely with the school that the teacher and the parent can discuss, without emotion, the strengths and weaknesses of the child.

4. Parents should realize the potential of a good summer reading program and cooperate with teachers and librarians.

5. Only when librarians, teachers, and parents are sensitive to the indi-

vidual differences in children will the full potential of guidance through summer reading be accomplished.

The leisurely and relaxed approach to reading in the summer in a library away from the pressure of the classroom and the competition and comparison with other children make the vacation program ideal for meeting the needs of youngsters.

Reading is more than a mere textbook skill. Summer library reading is more than a game to increase lagging library circulation. The rich heritage to be found in the library will add much to the child's experience. By fostering summer reading that is geared to the individual child, the school can aid this child to read his very best. Fostering summer reading opens a new avenue for home-school cooperation and permits the school to extend its services where they will help children to learn.

Parents, Children and the Library

by Harriet E. Bard

*Librarian, Morrison Reeves Public Library
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LIBRARIES have so long been considered by many parents as repositories for books, and librarians as guardians of those collections, that perhaps it is not out of place to state the obvious. The modern children's library shares with the home and the school a responsibility for what children read. The American child has a heritage of literature of his own which is waiting

for him in libraries. It is freely acknowledged that each child should have a small home library, but these are only the titles he loves the best, the ones to be read over and over. His first acquaintance with these titles is at the public library where there are many books to choose from and where selection begins.

Consequently, an early responsibil-

ity of the parent is to become acquainted with the children's collection of the library. One of his responsibilities is to provide for the child's need for beautiful words and pictures. The best way to accomplish this, in my opinion, is to read aloud. There is a pleasure in this shared experience equaled by nothing else. Any two people who have laughed over the same story or felt a pleasant glow of satisfaction, or a mutual feeling of sadness or the stimulation of new thoughts and ideas are drawn closer together.

Reading With Children

Reading aloud can begin far earlier than many parents realize. The child of eighteen months to two years delights in pictures of objects with which he is familiar and will early listen to a line or two of a story. Mother Goose is a stand-by for this age. *The Real Mother Goose* is a popular edition of this favorite, with large, brightly colored illustrations. A little child will pore over the *Rainbow Dictionary* or the *Picture Dictionary*, finding those objects he knows. His ear can be as delighted as his eye so stories with rhythm and much repetition will please him. For twenty-five years, Wanda Gag's picture book *Millions of Cats* has been a favorite as well as the adventures of the curious Scotch terrier in *Angus and the Ducks* by Marjorie Flack.

With the numbers of fine books available in a library, it is always possible to find one that everyone in the family can enjoy reading aloud. For one family the right book may be *Alice in Wonderland*; for another

Kipling's *Just So Stories*. I know a family in which for twenty years *Winnie-the-Pooh* has not been a teddy bear in a book but a personal friend. The young mother in that family realized her inadequacy as a game player, but she loved to read aloud. Something of her own pleasure and enthusiasm may have had its influence upon the children along with the books she read. At any rate, of all the books, Pooh became the top favorite. Before the children could read, the mother was the reader. Later, as she cooked or ironed, she was the listener and a child read. As vicissitudes occurred in that family, persistent illness, the father's death, adjustment to a new community, Pooh was a familiar and beloved stand-by, always a shared enjoyment. Life in a strange community didn't seem quite so difficult or strange after laughing over the absurd adventures of the lovable and familiar Pooh. The daughter in the family, now married, is reading the same story to her daughter, and the son, also grown, has been known, when the world seemed too much with him, to request a little reading aloud from *Winnie-the-Pooh*!

In this same family, reading aloud on the part of the children was the stepping stone to learning to read to themselves. It was a beautiful edition of Greek myths which was the bridge across to the daughter's enjoyment of independent reading. She was impatient to be on with her tales and the times when her mother could listen seemed so few, that she worked out her own pronunciation of the Greek names and went ahead with the book alone. It was one of the Lucy Fitch

Perkins "Twin" books which was the bridge book for the boy.

Finding the Right Book

This brings me to a second point which I believe in as sincerely as in the importance of reading aloud. And that is that there is no child who cannot learn to read with pleasure if we find the right book for him. He may not be an omniverous reader and it is not possible to say at what age we may reach him, but reading can be a satisfaction and a joy.

If parents have not established the library habit in pre-school days, this is the time when the public library with all its variety can be of real assistance. The non-reader may have great ability with everything mechanical. He may be the boy who could operate all his electric train equipment smoothly before he was old enough to go to school. Bulldozers, trucks, trains are all that interest him. The children's librarian who is informed of his interests has books for him. *The Big Book of Real Trains* and *The Big Book of Real Trucks* by George J. Zaffo are likely to be the keys to his reading interest.

For the child eager for facts, Herbert Zim's books may be the answer. *What's Inside of Animals* with its clear, colored illustrations of the whole animal and then the inside of the same animal with simple, easily read text, is only one of many books of facts by this author.

For the air-minded questioner, Jeanne Bendick and Jack Coggins have provided material. Herman and Nina Schneider and Millicent Selsam have answered the needs of the na-

ture-minded boys and girls with their books on leaves, eggs, plants, rocks and stars. Harry Zarchy's books deal with such activities as woodworking, stamp collecting, sculpture and fishing.

While some of this material is planned for the older child, a generous amount is ready for the child just beginning to do independent reading. Often the parent of this sort of child has to feign an interest she does not feel and is obliged to look at pictures and listen to text as she gets dinner or does the ironing. This is a small sacrifice if a reader is made, and it's almost a certainty that the adult as well as the child will gain some worthwhile information.

So much for the child seeking facts. What about the child of imagination? What sort of imagination? Not the sort that is satisfied by Andrew Lang's *Blue Fairy Book*, for instance, but one who wants something a little more possible with a touch of the improbable. For him there's a book of folk tales about our great Middle West called *Sand in the Bag*, which may be the answer, or Natalie Carlson's stories of French Canada called *The Talking Cat*, or the legendary hero tales of Paul Bunyan or Pecos Bill or Captain Stormalong. Poetry must not be forgotten. It appeals to the child's sense of rhythm as well as to his imagination and his feeling for beauty.

Beauty itself may be the key to a child's interest in reading, and there is almost no limit to the lovely children's books. For example the Caldecott Medal has been presented each year since 1937 for "the most distinguished American picture book for

children." What variety of beauty a child would find were he to sit down to a table on which were spread even part of these titles!

There are innumerable other interests that could be discussed and the books that might serve as a bridge to reading enjoyment, but one last category should be mentioned because it is the most widely asked for by the children themselves. These are stories about other American children and their everyday experiences. Carolyn Haywood has written very successfully for this group, beginning with *B Is for Betsy*, which can be read by second and third graders. For a slightly older group Beverly Cleary is writing of home and school adventures that are eminently satisfying. Lois Lenski, Miriam Mason, Marguerite DeAngeli, Mabel Leigh Hunt are others, and the list could go on and on.

In thinking of parents and children and the ways in which libraries may be of help, one final important factor is the heritage of solid Americanism which belongs to children through books. At a time when un-American activities and subversive elements are being investigated and talked and written about all over our land, it seems to me more important than ever to take a positive approach, to have our children know about our country, what democracy really means, who the people were, both the famous ones and the ordinary folk, who helped to build our nation and to give us what we now so often take for granted. Fortunately there is no section of children's literature so rich in material as this one, none so beautiful in both story and illustration. In fact,

so much that is fine has been written that it seems wise to limit the examples used here to the publications of the past two years.

It would seem that no child who reads could possibly grow up nowadays without an appreciation for biography. The always popular Buffalo Bill is the subject of text and pictures by the d'Aulaires. James Daugherty who has done similar outstanding books has recently written of the Lewis and Clark expedition in *Of Courage Undaunted*. Genevieve Foster's life of Andrew Jackson for eight- to twelve-year-olds and Clara Ingram Judson's life of Thomas Jefferson for an older group make their subjects real and alive. In their book of all the presidents from Washington to Truman, the Petershams have, to a remarkable degree, given a history of our country in both good times and bad.

Perhaps nothing so much gives the flavor of American history and democracy as the stories of the way people live at various periods. No group of books does this better than those of Laura Ingalls Wilder, written out of her own experience as a little girl. These stories are not new, but in 1953 were reissued in a handsome uniform edition which should go on delighting, and incidentally teaching, young Americans, for years to come. *Caroline and Her Kettle Named Maud* by Miriam Mason is a tale of pioneer days in Michigan and *The Journey of Josiah Talltatters* by Josephine Payne recounts the journey from Philadelphia to Natchez, Mississippi, over the early paths and traces. Mabel Leigh Hunt's story of the Freed family tells

of the problems of interracial relationships and interprets an important aspect of American democracy. No more warmly American picture could be asked for than that of the Gordon family, about whom Evelyn Sickels writes in *That Boy Johnny*.

To sum up, we have reading aloud in the family as perhaps the most important foundation for later independent reading enjoyment. In these days when mother has to be cook, laundress, chauffeur, all things to all people in her family, I suggest reading aloud as an opportunity to sit still briefly, relax, and through the windows of children's literature, look at a different and often lovelier world.

In the second place, I make bold to assert that there is a right book for every child which will be the first step in a bridge to his reading enjoyment. More even than in the first instance, the children's librarian, as a bibliotherapist, should be sought out and

used. In the case of the home which is ignorant of or indifferent to the potentialities of the library, the teacher is the vital link. It is she who can direct the child to the school or public library and can give the librarian the necessary information about reading skill and interest to start her on her way to find the right book.

And finally, by passing on to our children a knowledge of our nation's past, we may assure them of their heritage as Americans.

These three responsibilities are the privilege of parents, teachers, librarians. The work of one in these fields cannot succeed without the assistance of the others. But what they can achieve together is best expressed by the thirteen-year-old winner of the Milwaukee Diamond Jubilee Essay Contest on "What the Library Means to Me." In three words he summed it up: "Reading happiness unlimited."

The Questions Parents Ask About Children's Reading

by Lilly Peterson

Principal, Jason Lee School

Richland, Washington

EACH year the teachers and principals of the Richland, Washington, Public Schools work toward curriculum improvement and better communication between home and school. Teachers are permitted to choose, according to their interests, and volunteer for committee work in the various areas of study. This year a coop-

erative study of the reading program resulted in publication of a booklet for parents that has been much appreciated.

This brochure was designed to give the information that would answer the most common questions arising in the home in connection with the school's reading program. It was carefully

planned after the committee in charge of the reading study had met many times, had conferred with their fellow teachers, made research studies of common practices in the Richland schools, and had consulted with the principals and the superintendent who also were interested in the improvement of curriculum and of public relations.

The committee was composed of one primary and one intermediate teacher from each of the seven elementary schools of the system and a principal who acted as chairman. After outlining a program of procedure, the committee subdivided into a primary group and an intermediate group for more detailed study. The members of these divisions chose their chairmen, conferred frequently, and held joint meetings occasionally for general discussion of progress and to coordinate their findings.

The Questionnaire

It was decided early that, in order to inform parents about the school's reading program, it would be advisable to find out first what they wanted to know. A questionnaire was sent to each home for parents to answer and send back to school. Knowing that lengthy, detailed bulletins are often ineffective, the committee simplified the form letter to read:

Dear Parents:

A committee, composed of sixteen teachers representing all the elementary schools in Richland, is working on improvement of reading for your child. We are asking your help, as we know you are interested in the

reading program.

What would you like to know, as a parent, about your child's reading program?

Please write your questions below and send this slip back to school. Use the back of the sheet, if necessary.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

*The Curriculum Reading
Committee*

Lilly Peterson, chairman.

Space was left to write in (1) Primary level questions and (2) Intermediate level questions (4th, 5th, 6th)

About seventy percent of the thousand questionnaires were returned with questions or comments. The curriculum committee tabulated the questions. Then they selected those that were most frequently asked as being representative of the kind of information that parents wanted. The task of formulating clear, concise answers to these questions then followed. Teachers strove to avoid long and complicated sentences involving professional terminology.

Among the most frequently asked questions were:

1. What is meant by reading readiness?
2. Why is so much time spent in preparing a child to read charts rather than starting him in a book?
3. Are children taught phonics?
4. My children have learned to read by sight rather than by sound. Why is this a better way?
5. Are phonics taught on the intermediate level, if children need it?
6. What can I do to help my child

become a better reader?

7. Are there some books for parents so we can help our children by understanding the reading process better?

8. In case a pupil is slower than others, is he given any special help?

9. Do children have access to the library for outside reading?

10. Are their library choices critically inspected for ability level?

11. What books or magazines would be good for my child to read at home to help with his school reading?

12. How do you go about teaching an intermediate child sounds and basic fundamentals that were not grasped in the primary grades?

13. Is outside reading required in intermediate grades?

14. Why are children grouped for reading?

15. Doesn't grouping give children a feeling of inferiority?

16. How can I help to interest my child in reading something besides the comics?

17. Sometimes my child reads a great deal but doesn't seem to know what it's all about after he has finished. How can he be helped?

18. Isn't the alphabet taught any more? When should a child know it?

19. How are children taught to recognize new words and to understand what they read?

20. What are the aims of the reading program for the fourth grade, aside from increasing the vocabulary?

21. What are the general steps or abilities necessary for reading?

22. Do we have any remedial reading any more?

23. Is the class kept on the same level or is it done in groups so the

slower ones can be given more time to develop?

24. How can parents find out how their children are progressing before time for report cards to be issued?

What Parents Are Saying

Many parents expressed satisfaction with the present reading program, showing that teachers had already done much good work toward educating the public about the school's aims and procedures. These favorable remarks also showed that many children are making good progress in today's schools despite occasional caustic criticisms to the contrary! Parents expressed themselves about many things. One commented on the community drives and campaigns to which school children are asked to contribute. She felt that, although these may be worthwhile causes, the teachers did not have time to attend to them in addition to their job of teaching fundamentals.

Another parent cited instances of children whom she had observed in Sunday School and in youth groups who couldn't read well, couldn't use practical everyday arithmetic, and who were evidently the products of the ultra-modern methods of education. At the same time she said that she was well pleased with her own children's progress.

"I think the old-fashioned way of teaching reading by sounds was much better than teaching a child to learn the words first. I think they learned faster and didn't have so much trouble," commented another parent.

Another contributor wrote:

"If I may, since I am more than

satisfied with what I have seen of the work being done, I would like to give hearty praise to the present reading program, especially the use of current events and the weekly newspapers in the classroom and the manner in which they make use of words that are familiar to the children. I am more than thankful that my boy has the opportunity of being taught by newer progressive methods."

One mother said, "My girl needs to become more independent in her reading, and also, she is helpless in spelling except the words she memorizes."

Other replies included the following statements that contain a good deal of food for thought and action:

"I believe that my child's personality demands a level which challenges her to keep up at a certain pace. She was first put into the medium group, but after talking with her teacher who was very understanding, the child was placed in the high group and her work became much better."

"I am much concerned about a good phonetic background. I would like to know also, what history reading my child will do. I think he should know the ethics of his Founding Fathers, also the really good authors."

"As far as my boy is concerned, the reading methods have been very satisfactory and successful. My problem is keeping enough books on hand."

"As far as can be determined, my child's reading is progressing in a satisfactory manner. If she is being given reading assignments commensurate with her ability that should be all that is required."

"Since I am very pleased with my boy's progress, I can raise no question. I am pleased, too, with his reactions to school this year. His trouble has been one of over-stimulation. Better supervision during play time has helped. I am very grateful that fighting has not been allowed on the playground."

"I am more in favor of the phonetic method than the reading readiness."

"I have no questions. My child is a very good reader. I'm sure your program must be a good one."

"Your reading program seems quite satisfactory. My boy is able to read out loud, even from grownup books."

"I am very interested in knowing *everything* about it, because we parents know very little about it as yet. I might say anyone can learn to read, and even read rapidly, but does he retain the thought? Does he see the picture in his mind? How do you get him to do this?"

"We attended a program last year in your school where the reading program was explained pretty thoroughly. I have been pleased with the speed and the understanding with which the children learned to read."

"Just so you're teaching phonics, that's all I'm concerned about."

Following Up the Questionnaire

Many suggestions were gleaned by teachers from these remarks. Even those that were partially critical were used to good advantage and for the advancement of the entire curriculum and of good relationships. Many teacher-parent conferences stemmed from these replies. Although the

sheets that were sent home did not require a signature, many parents signed their names. Teachers could thus discuss particular points of interest or of uncertainty that were uppermost in the minds of the parents.

Individual differences were clarified and specific plans were laid cooperatively with parents for a great many pupils. Teachers of the first grades had a splendid opportunity to explain to parents who were new in the community that a special meeting of parents is held each fall after the Reading Readiness tests have been given, at which time an open discussion of the entire reading program is conducted.

Other teachers planned a Back-to-School Night for parents. Questions of a general nature were used by teachers for discussion with parents at the visiting period in classrooms preceding the PTA meeting each month. In one school an evening program was presented which demonstrated some of the regular classroom methods and procedures in curriculum. The favorable remarks of parents afterwards more than repaid teachers for the time and effort of planning and giving the program.

All teachers invited parents to visit the regular day's reading classes and it became a common sight to see parents coming and going at all hours. They became informed of our philosophy of reading—that it is a process of thought interpretation, a means instead of an end in itself, and that through it the child progresses socially, widens his interests, gains deeper appreciations, learns to organize his own

thinking, and enriches his understandings.

The committee felt that the two desired objectives had been attained by this work on the reading questionnaires and the resultant brochure:

(1) Improvement of the curriculum and (2) Better communication between home and school for the welfare of the child.

Publications on Reading Prepared for Parents

AN INCREASING number of schools and school systems are explaining their reading program to parents through printed pamphlets and bulletins. Some of them are simple teacher-prepared leaflets duplicated by hectograph or mimeograph. Others are more elaborate publications with photographs and two-color printing.

THE READING TEACHER has collected a number of these publications from fifty or more schools and school systems. A careful study of those submitted shows that "readiness" is the topic most frequently explained to parents. In fact, many of these publications are prepared specifically for parents of first graders. The schools of Baltimore, Maryland, have a six-page leaflet of questions and answers entitled "Beginning to Read." Dayton, Ohio, public schools have an eight-page leaflet "A Good Start in the First Grade."

In many school systems the information about beginning reading is included in a booklet on the whole school program of the kindergartener or first grader. Among these are

Pittsburgh's 16-page booklet "A Good Start" and New York City's 24-page booklet "How and What Your Child Learns at School."

The content of such booklets is for the most part rather general. Emphasis is on the readiness program with encouraging words to the parents to be patient, to enrich the child's world by neighborhood excursions, and to see that he maintains good health.

In the 16-page booklet prepared by the St. Louis Public Schools for parents of kindergarteners, there is also a suggested list of 25-cent books appropriate for the children as well as books of stories parents can read aloud.

In Madison, Wisconsin, the schools distribute to parents a number of booklists suggesting titles of books that children are likely to find interesting on various subjects and at various grade levels.

There seems to be far less material for parents of children above kindergarten and first grade. The public schools of Minneapolis, however, have a series of three pamphlets intended for parents of children in various grade levels. These attractive eight-page booklets are entitled "Your Child Learns to Read" (Beginning reading), "Your Child Wants to Be an Independent Reader" (Second grade); and "Your Child Is Growing Up With Reading" (Intermediate grades).

Seattle has a series of six and eight-page "How We Teach" folders for parents of all age levels. One explains "How We Teach Spelling," another Handwriting, another Art, another Citizenship.

Informal Letters

Of particular interest are the very friendly, informal letters which several school systems have sent home to explain a change in the school program. The superintendent of schools in St. Louis sent out a series of such letters to orient parents of five-year-olds.

In Long Beach, California, a series of mimeographed letters went out to parents to explain the new "split schedule" which permits one half of the class to come to school early for a reading period before the second half arrives and the second half to remain for a reading period after the first half leaves for the day. These letters explained the importance of the teacher's working with small groups of children to meet their individual needs in reading.

Indianapolis Uses TV

Television was put to work in the interests of the reading program in the public schools of Indianapolis during the first semester this year. An advance letter to parents from Superintendent Shibler announced the twelve programs scheduled for WFBM-TV on Wednesdays from 5:30 to 5:45 p.m. The topics discussed on successive weeks were: Experience, Chart Reading, Motivation for Reading, Using Phonetics to Improve Reading, Poetry, Developing Interest in the Problem, Reading for Information, Critical Reading, Recreational Reading, Dramatization, Appreciation, Development Reading, How You as a Parent Can Help.

Teacher Training in a Summer Reading Clinic

by Mary H. B. Wollner and

Elizabeth V. Richmond

Rockford College Summer Reading Clinic

Rockford, Illinois

Is it possible for a College Reading Clinic to provide laboratory training and practical experience in remedial reading procedures for the elementary teacher in a six-weeks' summer session?

Can the teacher become familiar with current research and good remedial reading practices? Will she return to her pupils in the fall prepared to apply appropriate diagnostic measures or corrective techniques?

In an attempt to find an answer in part to the needs of the classroom teacher for more skill and confidence in dealing with retarded readers, Rockford College in the summer of 1952 inaugurated a course in theory and practice of remedial reading techniques on the elementary school level. Experienced teachers from Rockford and nearby communities who elected the course, which offered six academic credits, served as tutors to the 24 summer clinic pupils who were children between the ages of eight and twelve referred to the clinic by physicians, principals, and teachers. All clinic applicants were given screening tests to measure reading capacity and attainment and to determine their suitability as subjects for remedial instruction by teachers receiving training in tutorial techniques. All of the pupils were of normal or high verbal intelligence and were adjudged

by the clinic staff as having specific reading disability.

Guidance and Instruction

During the six weeks the teacher-tutors received guidance and instruction in the following:

(1) Understanding both formal and informal screening tests administered to pupils who were accepted for the special clinic work.

(2) Appraising their individually-assigned pupil's total reading status, including ability, achievement, school history, family background, lateral dominance, interests, and attitudes.

(3) Planning, with the pupils and with the clinic staff, corrective programs for their two individual pupils.

(4) Preparing and carrying out small group activities appropriate to the age and reading levels of clinic pupils for their half-hour reading club meetings.

(5) Devising and constructing group reading games and instructional materials particularly suited to the needs of their individual pupils.

(6) Becoming familiar with children's literature of high interest and low vocabulary.

Clinic Philosophy

Ingenuity and inventiveness were encouraged in both individual and group work, although there was more

work in reading club activities than in the tutorial sessions. To acquaint the teacher-tutor with the general philosophy of the Rockford College reading clinic, three principles were stressed:

1. The screening tests administered to pupils are intended to help us find the pupil's most "comfortable" reading level. A pupil is introduced to books *at or just below* his average reading attainment.

2. No published basic texts are used in our clinic. Rather, we select books with high interest, low vocabulary and a fairly controllable reading level. Books are made available which have strong appeal—in format, illustrations, and story quality—to children of good intelligence.

3. We believe in using a minimum of published games and materials. Tutors are asked to devise and construct original materials which, we find, pupils prefer to the commercial devices. The values are in the personal touch provided by the teacher effort ("My teacher made this for me!") and in the greater freshness and spontaneity of reading exercises and games jointly devised by teacher and pupil or provided by a teacher for the needs and interests of a particular pupil.

Clubs and Conferences

Of central importance to the teacher-training were two procedures of the summer clinic: the reading clubs, in which is emphasized an awareness of the socialization process which is comparable to pupil interaction in the classroom, and the case conference in which the dynamics of each case are

discussed in professional confidence by the teacher-tutors and the clinic staff members.

In evaluating their six-weeks training course, the tutor-teachers summarized their experiences as follows:

1. It is essential in promoting growth in reading for the tutor to take the child where he finds him, accepting him as a worthwhile individual and a potential learner.

2. The first and most basic step in the tutoring process is the establishment of a feeling of confidence in the learner. Often, the most valuable outcome of the tutoring situation is the child's increase in self-respect.

3. Tutors need to learn to steer a half-way course between permissiveness and structuring.

4. Tutors learn to *pace* the work of the pupil in terms of the individual child's interest and mood. They learn to encourage the pupil's initiative and any signs of independent thinking—in choices of books to read, decisions about which exercises to work on, or in expressions of feeling about the progress he is making.

Take-Home Booklets

Twelve new take-home booklets have been developed by Row, Peterson. The plan is to have each child take home one of these full-color, 16-page booklets on completion of his pre-primer, primer or reader. At home he reads with ease since his booklet is based on his school reader.

Twelve illustrated booklets, 5½x4, make up this series known as "My Own Books."

How Can We Help the Reluctant Teacher?

by Dorothy E. Cooke
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The State Department of Education
Albany, New York

THE RELUCTANT teacher—reluctant to accept and put into action a developmental reading program—is a problem both to herself and to the supervisor. There are many causes or reasons why a teacher may be reluctant. As in all good education, the attack on the problem is to try to determine the cause, eliminate the cause if possible, and then provide the needed assistance to make progress in the right direction.

One of the first steps in helping reluctant teachers is to give them an appreciation of their own importance. The teacher has the key role in education; it is she who interprets the planned program *in action* with children in the classroom. The program can be no stronger than the individual teacher.

As the teacher is charged with knowing the "whole" child, the supervisor or consultant who works with teachers should make every reasonable effort to know the "whole" teacher. When planning the curriculum, small discussion groups provide opportunities for participants to know each other better. This is one way confidence may be bred, and persons having confidence in each other will work better together.

In these enlightened days, no school should attempt to launch a program

of reading that is not cooperatively planned and therefore accepted by the staff. Cooperative planning offers many opportunities for teacher growth including that of the reluctant teacher. The supervisor or chairman of the planning group may invite the reluctant teacher to serve on a committee to evaluate reading textbooks and their respective manuals. Much understanding should result from this procedure. A study and use of readability formulas in evaluating texts serve as an eye-opener as to why the reading content is difficult and also why one should not accept a statement concerning readability without knowing what has been measured and how it was measured.

Teacher growth and participation can also be developed through the reviewing of films and other materials to determine the ones to be recommended for classroom or in-service use.

Develop Teacher's Understanding of the Program

Through working with the reluctant teacher, we must be certain that this teacher understands the planned reading program well enough to put it into action. In a face-to-face conference, the supervisor and the teacher can discuss plans for developing the

desired program in the classroom. During this conference the supervisor can decide with the teacher what help and what materials are wanted and needed.

If the I-don't-understand attitude is still prevalent in this conference, the supervisor should offer to work with the teacher in her classroom. Plans are then made cooperatively with the teacher, and the supervisor puts these plans into action with children while the teacher observes. During the period of the supervisor's demonstration, a few other teachers wanting the same help could be replaced by substitutes and also observe the teaching demonstration.

Later, after observing the supervisor, the classroom teacher can try her wings—and probably win them. A nationally-recognized teacher of supervision recommends that the supervisor's time is better spent in the foregoing manner than in classroom observation of all staff members whether they need it or not. (Classroom observation, as all supervisors know, is only one facet of a good supervisory program.)

Encourage Teachers to Attend Professional Meetings

All teachers should be encouraged to attend professional meetings where reading is the point of discussion. Brief reports could be given to the faculty. At times, possibly a one-page summary of the meeting could be distributed to the staff. Suggestions so gained for improvement of reading involving more than one grade level should be evaluated by the staff and, if thought to be of value, could then

be given a try-out in the school. Individual teachers should also be free to try out suggestions. It follows that ideas found to yield improvement by the staff or the individual teacher should be shared with the entire group. The alert supervisor will encourage and assist the reluctant teacher in achieving success with new ideas.

Provide Released Time

A plan for released time for teacher improvement should be made. Where supervision is limited, some schools arrange to have the teacher needing or wanting help observe in the room of a teacher who has a successful program of instruction. This visitation should be for at least one week. It may be for the reading periods only. But a good reading program is continuous throughout the day with reading at one time or another a part of each content area. Therefore, better results will be obtained from all-day visitation. After the one teacher has observed for the time agreed upon, the demonstration teacher is released from her classroom and then observes the first teacher for the same period of time. Difficulties and progress are evaluated daily as well as at the close of the observation by both teachers.

"What Do We Do Now, Teacher?"

In these days of matching instruction with a child's ability to learn, small reading groups are formed within the classroom group. One of the foremost problems for the teacher is what to plan for the other groups while spending her time in the instruction of one group. I have known

many otherwise capable and willing teachers who are seemingly unable to cope with the grouping situation. Here, too, we find some teachers reluctant to leave their present way of teaching for one in which they feel insecure. I have frequently termed this problem "The Sixty-four Dollar Question." It is one that should be brought out and ideas pooled for its solution.

One of the first steps is to provide *interest corners* in the classroom. One of these should be devoted to related reading activities; here, children can play word games or other related reading games. Pupils and the teacher can originate reading games for use in this corner. Word games based on Bingo are easy to plan. In a class last summer, one high school teacher reported that her literature students enjoyed word-Bingo as part of checking their expanding vocabularies. They also reversed cards on which definitions were given and then a word was matched with its definition. A game of this type can easily be played quietly in the reading corner.

A *social studies corner* offers many opportunities for related reading activities. Here a play may be written, a bibliography compiled by a committee, or research may be done. A knotty reading problem may be solved by scheduling small study groups. These groups can list "Important Facts to Remember." Games can be originated on important facts to be remembered. At other times questions can be written on material read. In grades five and six, children can begin to learn to outline. In this corner, too, map games will sometimes be

found. You may find an index of "Have You Read This?" Books can be recommended by the pupils for this file. Particular care should be taken to include only books that are of interest. There is that story of the pupil who read a book recommended by the teacher, and then said in surprised fashion, "Well, this is interesting!"

A *science corner* in which objects or projects are changed at least weekly captivates interest. Some objects are to be examined, or to be sketched, or to be tasted, or to be prepared for a chart, or to be used and then stored for permanent reference. At times an experiment may be set up for all to try. These and many other activities can occupy the science corner.

Manipulative materials for discovering or proving mathematical problems and combinations should be available in another area. Varied materials can be left on this table to stimulate an increasing interest in math. Games, too, some originated by the children, should be available here.

A reluctant teacher may say "I cannot stand the confusion." In a program involving activities of this kind the teacher and pupils plan ways of working together. The fact is brought out that liberty always means the acceptance of responsibilities. Liberties with their accompanying responsibilities can be listed and suggestions made for retaining the liberties.

"Man Can No Maka Magic"

A friend of mine teaching in a class of children of Italian parentage was telling the story of how paper is made. She told of the chopping of the trees, the transportation to the mill, and the

making of the pulp. As the story went on, she noticed one little boy became more and more excited. Finally, unable to contain himself further, he felt called upon to save the situation. He jumped to his feet and called out, "Teccha, don' you believe it! Don' you believe it! Man can no maka magic!"

Unfortunately, today, there are some who are seeking magic for the teaching of reading, a panacea to end all difficulties—or worse, machines to do the work. Fortunately, those who seek these ways are in the minority. Look to research—not one or a few isolated pieces—but the gamut of research in reading that shows us how girls and boys grow and how they learn. Learning to read should be a developmental process—a pleasant experience for even the least of these

girls and boys.

THE READING TEACHER has recorded that the development program in reading is one that includes development of skills in five areas: the areas of 1) basic reading skills usually based on a textbook, 2) reading study skills, 3) children's literature, 4) oral reading and 5) free choice reading. It is this program that we are desirous of having teachers appreciate, understand, and develop happily with children in their classrooms. When we have tried all these things—and a teacher still stands reluctant—we shall find other ways. We shall continue to work with the teacher until we can say with Edwin Markham:

*He drew a circle that shut me out—
Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout.
But Love and I had the wit to win:
We drew a circle that took him in.*

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"When I First Started Teaching"— The Tape-Recorded Comments of One Teacher

*by June McLeod
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BEGINNING teachers, and possibly some not-so-beginning, are likely to think that there must be *a way, a one way*, to teach reading to children. So certain are some students in pre-service education that such a method exists that frequently, I'm sure, they feel that their college teachers are deliberately keeping that way hidden from them. That a number of approaches to the teaching of reading, equally in harmony with the general philosophy of child development may be used effectively seems hard to accept. Hence it is refreshing to find a beginning teacher who has caught the basic ingredients needed for optimum growth in children to such an extent that she reflects a fine educational philosophy and can also withstand pressures pulling her in an opposite direction.

Such a teacher is the one who is quoted in this article. She had learned that children are individuals, each unique in his development, growing at different rates. In her first job she attempted to apply these principles to a reading program. She refused to use the customary slow, middle, and fast ability groupings. Instead she organized her reading program on an individualized basis.

However, her inexperience prevented her from operating in a smooth

fashion, and she became confused by the multiplicity of mechanical problems that arose by having children in different places at different times in different books. This confusion led her to admire the seemingly serene classrooms of the neighboring teachers. They used homogeneous groupings of "Bluebirds," "Robins" and "Canaries," with every child within a group reading the same page in the same book. After five months this teacher moved to another school. This gave her the opportunity she thought she wanted—to get a new start in a reading program and to use the seemingly serene methods of her peer teachers in the first situation.

Her Own Story

Here is the story of what happened. It is told in her own words, as she told it in an interview with the writer. The words hold such quality of respect for the basic individuality of children with a disturbing confusion of philosophy that they seem to be worthy of verbatim quote as they came from the tape recording:

"When I first started teaching, I went all out for meeting the needs of individual children, especially in reading. When I came in and found other teachers had them in set groups, I tried to start that way so that I'd

have something to begin with. But later on I couldn't see how it would work when children are so different. So in the first grade, after a month, all the children were in a different place and I even had a different page for each child so if a child didn't remember I'd know. Sometimes I heard each child read alone every day. Not every child every day, but I'd call up one group like *Rain and Shine*. They were in different places. I'd ask the child, 'Did you read this story? What is the first sentence?' And so on. I'd go around and help them.

"But it got so complicated that when I changed to this new school, I decided I was going to keep them in their books and all in the same place because I got lost the last time. I felt they had enough supplementary books and library books. So I had plenty of materials, and there was no reason they couldn't be guided in their books for part of the time. So I was going to introduce *new words*, introduce *the story every day* and talk about it. But again it happened!

"The children were just reading off on their own. Some were just so fast and such good readers that they would come up and say, 'I read it already,' even if I still had the books on the shelf and hadn't taken them down. I felt like a fool. It was just so ridiculous to go through that formality. They'd already read it, and it wasn't interesting to them. And so again they branched out, and I never was able to keep them all together at one place, like finish a story today, finish a story tomorrow. And so I began to do the same thing I did in

the first grade, and they all went on their own. I had them up, I had them read individually and I have right now one group, *Friends and Neighbors*, who stay together because they seem so fit for it. They read one story a day and it works out. And one other group, *More Friends and Neighbors*. The rest of them just go out on their own in different books.

"Even the slow readers can't keep together. I used to keep them together and I *knew* they weren't getting it, even silently. It was just too much, too slow. They were missing words; and when someone read orally, they weren't interested. Their minds would wander, and so I had to take them up alone. And they feel better too; they don't feel like they're labeled in a group . . . And I think that it worked."

Highlights of Her Experience

What can be highlighted from this teacher's experience as she related it? First, when she began teaching she had a definite guiding principle in mind: "Meet the needs of individual children." Second, she was aware of the other teachers and it was important to her to gain acceptance and recognition from them. In this instance there was a conflict between what she believed about children and her need to be accepted. She chose first to seek acceptance by not being too different from the others. But with her belief in meeting the needs of individual children and her sensitivity to these needs, set groups did not work out. Therefore she developed a reading program that was in keeping with her orientation toward

children. But she was unsure.

Two factors made her unsure of her individualized approach. One was, in her own words, "It got so complicated." The other was the lack of support, though not necessarily criticism, from both fellow teachers and those in supervisory capacity. So in a new situation she determined to try set groupings a second time. But "*again* it happened!" Those seven-year-olds, like the younger sixes, could not be molded and shaped to theoretical averages and grade norms. At one end of the scale, they were "just reading off." At the other end, "Even the slow readers can't keep together." Predetermined, fixed groupings—perhaps better than no groupings—still did not really provide an opportunity for each child to function at his optimum level. But by now the conflict between meeting children's needs and her own need for acceptance was shrinking. No doubt this was partly because a little experience had given her some security and mechanical know-how. In another part of the interview she also indicated that she was getting support from the administration and acceptance by her peers even though she was approaching reading in a slightly different manner.

She is still not altogether sure, but in the repeat performance some of the original problems seem to have disappeared. No longer is the process described in terms of "complicated." A positive attitude is noted: "They feel better, too," and "I think it worked."

Here is not the working out of someone else's method, but rather a

way that seems to work for one person because it is intrinsically her own, developed from her own insights into and understanding of children's needs. It works because she and her group seem "so fit for it."

I'm sure many young persons with this same fine sensitivity for children and with real potential for teaching are entering the teaching profession each year. Will they succumb to the mediocrity, patterned, unimaginative, uncreative, same-as-everybody-else way of handling reading—it may or it may not be "teaching"—because of fear or criticism of the teacher in the next room or the supervisor or principal? I hope not, but it's not an easy pressure to withstand. Given an accepting, friendly, supportive, encouraging, free-to-experiment environment, beginning teachers might discover many doors opening upon new and never-thought-of worlds. The big question is: will we give them a chance?

Children and TV

In a new 40-page service bulletin (Number 93) entitled "Children and TV" the Association for Childhood Education International presents pertinent information and suggestions for ways in which teachers and parents can "make the most of it."

Contributors to the bulletin include Erna Christensen, Paul Witty, Alice Seekamp, Florence Brumbaugh, James L. Hymes, Jr., and Paul Witt. Copies may be purchased from ACEI headquarters, 1200 15th St. N.W., Washington 5, D.C. Price 75 cents.

High School Students Build Vocabularies

by Regina Heavey
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Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

THE TEACHING of vocabulary building has a two-fold objective. It aims to increase the number of known words in as many areas as possible and to promote mastery of partially known ones. The range of vocabulary can be extended independently only if the student has been trained in the habit of identifying new words. To obtain mastery, he must be instructed in the language arts approach to all words, both new and partially known. The ideal instructional situation is one in which both range and mastery are striven for by all teachers in all subject areas.

Importance of Word Attack Skills

Training in the habit of identifying unfamiliar words begins with initial reading. In the primary grades, the pupil is encouraged to ask the teacher for help if he cannot pronounce a word or comprehend its meaning. When he does so, he is commended. As his word attack skills become better established and he learns to use the dictionary more efficiently, he gradually acquires independence in making new words his own. Unfortunately, what actually happens is not always so logical. Many students arrive in high school without having acquired the skills essential to independent word attack, without com-

petence in the use of the dictionary and without the habit of identifying unfamiliar words. A program of vocabulary building at secondary level, then, must of necessity include the opportunity to establish these aptitudes so that they may be readily put to use.

Because of his maturity and widening experience, there is likely to be an increasing disparity among a high school student's vocabularies. He knows words he can use only in writing. Others he comprehends in context but neither spells nor uses. Some he uses in speaking but does not recognize in the printed form. A few are meaningful to him only when he hears them spoken. If he is to gain mastery of words already partially familiar to him and greater power in self-expression and comprehension, he must be taught to integrate his writing, speaking, reading and listening vocabularies. That means, then, that instruction in vocabulary building should provide opportunity and incentive, not only for reading, but for speaking, writing and listening.

The Question of Methods

There are many good textbooks available that suggest a variety of methods and innumerable lists of words. The teacher who conscientiously follows one or more of these

texts cannot help but improve his students' vocabularies to some extent. All the time-honored methods—the teaching of prefixes, suffixes, stems, antonyms, synonyms, homonyms—have some value. Devices such as word games or the building of class or individual dictionaries can make the teaching of any of these facets of words more stimulating and interesting.

Pictures from magazines or newspapers can be used effectively. New words or the exact use of familiar ones can be developed from a picture. The process can be reversed and the picture used to clarify or illustrate meaning. Space does not permit a detailed discussion of the use of pictures at high school level for these purposes, but their value is so great, I have found, that they should not go unmentioned.

No method in itself is important. What matters is that the teacher of vocabulary building awaken in his students an appreciation of the richness and flexibility of our language. To do this he, himself, must have a feeling for the enchantment, the power and the beauty of words. Otherwise, the teaching of vocabulary building will be for both him and his students merely a task.

Evolved: A Practical Method

Like many teachers, I have been informed, in answer to the question "Do you read the newspaper?", that the student "reads only the headlines." The frequency of this response, especially from retarded readers, provided me with an interesting method of teaching vocabulary building. It

came, not as an inspiration, but as a by-product of curiosity.

I read the headlines thoughtfully myself to judge their readability and to determine just how much of the news my students could glean from them. The vocabulary of headlines, I discovered, is much more challenging than that of the context of the news.

If, then, my students were "reading only the headlines," what was the level of their comprehension?

As an assignment, I had each student bring in ten headlines. In class I asked them to tell orally what the headline meant. In that way we found, in short order, that they were unable to pronounce many of the words, much less grasp their meaning.

Next we tried to identify the unfamiliar words, to determine their meaning and to substitute synonyms for them. From this experimentation, I evolved a method of building vocabulary, applicable in various situations and subject areas.

Procedures Used

A student pastes on a paper a headline containing an unfamiliar word which he underlines. Then he lists the following:

1. a guess at its meaning from the context or from reading the initial sentences of the write-up
2. pronunciation as given in the dictionary
3. part of speech and meaning as they seem to apply in the context
4. an original sentence using the word

Such an assignment can be ex-

tended to five or ten words and readily checked for accuracy by the teacher. From several checked and revised assignments of this kind, a student can compile his own dictionary of new words or a class dictionary can be made.

The same assignment can be applied to advertisements. The use of headlines and advertisements from newspapers or magazines vitalizes the study of vocabulary building. It makes the student aware of unfamiliar words currently used in the world around him.

Application in Various Subject Areas

Often I have had students select unfamiliar words from whatever text they found difficult to use. Instead of pasting the headlines or advertisements on their papers, they have written the sentence containing the unfamiliar word, the name of the text and the page on which it appeared. The procedure indicated above for the headlines has then been followed to help establish mastery of the troublesome words.

Many students have elected to select their words from biology, history, geometry, bookkeeping or applied mechanics textbooks. Some have used more than one subject. The greatest value to be gained from applying this independent method of vocabulary building to subject areas is that it makes the student aware of how great an obstacle unfamiliar words can be to comprehension and, hence, to study. It demonstrates through convincing experience the importance of mastery of vocabulary as a basic

study skill.

The method also provides the teacher with dividends. By compiling lists of unfamiliar words identified by his students, he gains a realistic picture of their vocabulary needs. When these lists consist of words selected from subject areas, such as history or geometry, he has a valuable instructional aid for teachers of these subjects. When the lists are derived from magazines and newspapers, they contain lively, current vocabulary that the student encounters daily. Because of this, these student-identified words provide appropriate material for instruction in phonetic analysis or structural analysis.

Possible Uses and Outcomes of Method

The method suggested above, designed as it is to increase range and mastery of vocabulary through a language arts approach, is not intended for any special group of students. True, the intelligent student is apt at identifying unfamiliar words and keenly interested in the acquisition of new ones. Average students and slow learners whose reading comprehension and expression are limited by the paucity of their vocabularies can, however, be trained to look for unfamiliar words and to master them.

By leading all his students to see that words can be used imaginatively, precisely, dramatically and simply, a teacher gives them a key to the interpretation and appreciation of what they read. In addition to that, he gives them a means of commanding their thoughts in lucid oral and written expression.

Watch for the Pitfalls in Testing Oral Reading

by *Ralph C. Preston*
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THE IMPORTANCE of hearing a child read orally when a teacher or examiner is trying to get at the causes of a reading disability is well recognized. What can be learned by hearing a child read aloud? Oral reading reveals the frequency and nature of the child's word-recognition difficulties, the degree of his fluency and confidence in the reading situation, any deficiencies he may have in visual discrimination, the presence of any reversal tendencies, his degree of skill in (and his possible overdependence upon) use of context to supply substitutes for unknown printed words, possible preoccupation with words or parts of words, and perhaps still other lacks, skills, habits, and attitudes. Data on oral reading is further essential in determining the level of difficulty at which reading is fluent, and also the level of difficulty at which word-recognition difficulties occur with a frequency that precludes a smooth, intelligible flow of meanings.

Misleading Results

Like other crucial tests, those of oral reading are peculiarly subject to misleading results. Oral reading arouses disagreeable associations for many a retarded reader. He may associate it with nagging or with ignominious failure and humiliation. The request to read something orally may

cause an uneasiness against which he has no defenses. The accumulation of daily failure in oral reading in the classroom over several years may color and distort his attitude toward reading, toward his teachers, and toward himself.

In the face of the fact that oral reading is deemed important by most teachers, plus the fact that it is commanded by most of his age peers, a child's own lack of skill in reading is a blow to his pride and morale. It is not surprising, therefore, if oral reading situations should frighten him. In the majority of cases, such fear may be mitigated by an accepting, friendly attitude on the part of the teacher or examiner. Some children, however, persist in their uneasiness, and hence fail to perform typically while being tested.

Evidence of Unreliability

As one check on the reliability of oral reading, an experienced and skillful examiner in the Reading Clinic of the University of Pennsylvania administered Gray's *Standardized Oral Reading Paragraphs* near the beginning and again at the conclusion of a two-hour's examination to each of nineteen consecutive cases, all of whom were children of elementary and junior-high-school age. Eleven of the children scored higher on the sec-

ond administration of the test than on the first. Part of these gains may be due to the greater familiarity with the test during its second administration. However, it is doubtful if the gains of all children or all the gains of any of the children are attributable solely to practice effects. The scores of four of the subjects were as much as half a grade or more above their scores on the first test, the grade gain for each being respectively .5, .9, 1.4, and 2.2. It is probable that several factors contributed to the gains made by most of the children, including an increase in confidence as a result of greater familiarity with surroundings and examiner.

The reading of word lists is a type of oral testing which is similarly subject to unreliability. The case of an adult may be cited. The 90 words in the Diagnostic Reading Test (oral word attack section) were used. The woman being examined was obviously nervous. She misread four of the first five words as follows: *wuning* for *waning*, *through* for *though*, *freight* for *fright*, *grasped* for *gaspd*. The examiner said "Wait a minute!" They chatted for a short while about unrelated matters. After better rapport was established, the examination continued with only 6 errors committed in the remaining 85 words.

Another case comes to mind of a junior-high-school boy who, on the basis of a diagnostic examination, was judged to be a word-attack case. Yet during his instruction in the Clinic it was discovered he really had no word-attack difficulty at all when allowed sufficient time and when free of tension.

Improving the Reliability of Oral Reading Testing

It stands to reason that one way for the teacher or examiner to secure good and typical oral reading performance is to assume an accepting, non-critical, matter-of-fact attitude toward reading errors. He should not hesitate to supply quietly and without comment words upon which the child is "stumped." Moreover, oral reading tasks should be deferred until a number of non-reading tasks have been performed (such as occur during tests of perception and discrimination) to ease tension and create self-assurance. But all this is not enough.

Because of the variability that may occur in oral reading performance, the results of a single oral reading exercise do not seem to constitute a reliable basis for drawing conclusions. More than standardized tests are needed, since their grade-equivalent scores, valuable though they are, are notoriously misleading at indicating the level at which instruction should begin. The teacher or examiner should obtain more than one sample of the child's oral reading, preferably utilizing passages from a series of graded materials in order to find the level of difficulty at which reading is almost errorless, on one hand, and, on the other hand, the level at which word-recognition difficulties occur too frequently to permit smooth, meaningful interpretation. The levels thus revealed at which the child *can* and *cannot* read constitute perhaps the most valuable information to come from a reading examination. It tells the teacher what materials can be successfully used in teaching the child.

The Problem of Reading in Teaching Mathematics

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THE COMPLETE understanding and use of any kind of mathematics is dependent upon an individual's ability to read. In analyzing the interdependence of the two subjects we find:

1. The written language of mathematics is restricted to formal definitions, explanations and directions. This expository type of writing belongs peculiarly to mathematics and makes very difficult reading for children.

2. Words and prefixes used in one course of instruction often become dissociated when used in mathematics.

3. The idea of mathematics as a skill in manipulating numbers and little else is thoroughly ingrained in the average school child. When computation depends upon the interpretation of a verbal problem, the student is frequently lost.

4. Analysis is a basic fundamental of mathematics. In order to analyze a problem, a student must be able to read and logically interpret what he reads.

5. Most children are so anxious to get through with their assignments that they fail to read the directions and explanations.

6. There is a tendency to overdo the use of workbooks and visual aids in the learning processes of mathema-

tics. This operates against the normal challenge to read, analyze and work intelligently.

The Mathematics Vocabulary

The new words constantly being introduced in mathematics are so numerous and so frequently used after their introduction that the mathematics teacher must give them immediate and full explanation. Also, it seems necessary to foster reading interpretation of old words and prefixes by giving them the same sort of explanation. Until they are met in a mathematics class, such words may have been given only one association in the mind of the students. For instance, the prefix *sub* should logically be connected with the word *under*, since the student meets with such words as *submarine*, *subterranean*, and the like. But when the student comes across the word *subtend*, no seeming carry-over of the prefix *sub* is noticeable.

The word *similar* should be an easy one for most students, and it is until it is joined by the word *triangle*; then all meaning of "look alike" leaves the mind of the usual mathematics student. Such seemingly familiar words must be re-examined and their meanings brought up to date to include mathematics. It is only then that all

the qualifications that make triangles and polygons similar are understandable. Take the prefix *poly* used in the word *polygon*. Although the student comprehends *polytheism* and *polygamy*, he never thinks that in mathematics the same prefix has the identical meaning of *many*.

In geometry, especially, we find ourselves completely dependent on close application of English in the matter of pronunciation, spelling, punctuation and sentence structure. In the demonstration of the first principle of congruency—"if two sides and the included angle of one triangle are equal respectively to two sides and included angle of another triangle, the triangles are congruent"—it is not only the hard, new words *respectively* and *congruent* that prove difficult, but also the new association of the old word *included*.

The class may understand the word *included* when used with "this group being *included* with that group," but relate the same word to two sides and included angle, and the new student is in a state of utter confusion. He invariably includes the angle in the triangle but not between the two sides. The word *respectively* is strangely not as hard as the simpler and better known word *included*. The word *congruent* has two pitfalls for the student. It is not only hard to understand, but it is always mispronounced. Therefore, the most convincing correction to the pronunciation is to have the class look this word up in the dictionary, but the meaning frequently still does not become clear until it is associated with *incongruent*, a word they know and which has a

meaning exactly opposite to that of congruent.

Associated Learnings

When students realize the real difference between learning and memorizing, they are well on their way to working original problems with ease. The greatest test of the student's ability to read and interpret what he reads is found in the interpretation of a geometry problem—seeing the figure, selecting the hypothesis, and drawing the conclusion. This is true of problems in all mathematics courses. It is fun to associate the hypothesis and conclusion with conditional sentences in English.

Almost every word, sentence and concept calls for associated learning in history, science, English, foreign language, music and even physical education. For instance, the football player can understand the word *equilateral* if a lateral pass is brought into the discussion. Even those who have a knowledge of music understand fractions better because of their already learned knowledge of time and tempo in music. The expression X^2 is very confusing until the figure of a square of X units on a side shows that the area of that square has to be obtained by multiplying X by X . The use of other exponents follows easily.

The analysis necessary in understanding a problem in mathematics is best learned by oral class participation in group discussions. Guided in their thinking by being asked leading questions, students soon tackle their mathematics with the same excitement that always goes with solving puzzles.

Easy Reading Material for High School Students

by Dorothy Kendall Bracken
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ONE OF the most difficult problems facing high school teachers who are concerned with the improvement of reading is the selection of suitable reading materials. In a large measure the success of a reading program depends on the appropriateness of reading selections provided for the students. With a high percent of young people of high school age enrolled in the secondary school, an abundance of material is essential if maximum growth in reading skills is to be obtained. Large numbers of teen-age boys and girls whose reading level is below their grade placement need many selections of the easy, simplified, or adapted type.

As a result of the growing demand for easy reading material for high school students—material that is low in vocabulary load, simple in sentence structure, but high in interest level—publishers are offering books designed especially for this need. Today a high school teacher may choose easy reading materials from the following publishing areas: (1) textbooks, (2) juvenile trade books, and (3) adapted classics. In addition, the teacher has numerous professional guides in the form of lists, or bibliographies, and current book reviews of literature for adolescents.

Secondary school teachers who are

looking for easy reading material, first of all, may well consider the abundant supply of textbooks published for grades lower than the one they teach. Elementary school students during the years they spend in the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades see a relatively small number of textbooks when the total number published in our country is considered. Therefore, a social science, or science teacher, of the junior or senior high school may use a fifth or sixth grade social science, or science, text which was adopted in a school, a system, or a state other than the one attended by his students. Likewise, by checking on elementary school texts which have been published since his students passed the grades for which the text was designed, he will discover material which will not only be simple and easy but will also be new and fresh.

Secondly, the extensive juvenile book field offers a tremendous array of easy reading material for high school students. A publishing trend toward series of books, while criticized by certain experts in the field of children's literature, is a boon for many adolescents. The following is a list of some well-known series with representative titles:

AMERICAN HERITAGE SERIES, Aladdin Books (A Division of American

Book Co.), New York

Cowman's Kingdom by Edmund Collier

The Country of the Hawk by Edmund Collier

Back of Beyond by George Cory Franklin

Printer's Devil by Allan R. Bosworth

Wheat Won't Wait by Adele Gutzman Nathan

Jed Smith, Trail Blazer by Frank B. Latham
and other titles

AMERICAN ADVENTURE SERIES, Wheeler Publishing Co., Chicago

Kit Carson by Frank Lee Beals

Cowboys and Cattle Trails by Shannon and Warren Garst

Buffalo Bill by Frank Lee Beals

The Rush for Gold by Frank Lee Beals

Fur Trappers of the Old West by A. M. Anderson
and other titles

Edited by Emmett A. Betts

WINSTON ADVENTURE BOOKS, John C. Winston Co., Philadelphia

A Pirate Flag for Monterey by Lester del Rey

Drummer for Vincennes by George Sentman

Mosquitoes in the Big Ditch by Roger Burlingame

River of the West by Armstrong Sperry

War of the Mayan King by Rupert Hughes

Island Fortress by Roc Richmond
and other titles

THE FIRST BOOK SERIES, Franklin Watts, Inc., New York

The First Book of Electricity by

Samuel and Beryl Epstein

The First Book of Science Experiments by Rose Wyler

The First Book of Snakes by John Hoke

The First Book of Stones by M. B. Cormack

The First Book of Plants by Alice Dickinson

The First Book of Space Travel by Jeanne Bendick

and other titles

THE LANDMARK BOOKS, Random House, New York

The Pony Express by Samuel Hopkins Adams

Lee and Grant at Appomattox by MacKinlay Kantor

The Wright Brothers by Quentin Reynolds

The Coming of the Mormons by Jim Kjelgaard

Sam Houston, The Tallest Texan by William Johnson
and 35 other titles

WORLD LANDMARK BOOKS, Random House, New York

The Adventures and Discoveries of Marco Polo by Richard J. Walsh

Mary, Queen of Scots by Emily Hahn

Napoleon and the Battle of Waterloo by Frances Winwar

King Arthur and His Knights by Mabel L. Robinson

Royal Canadian Mounted Police by Richard L. Neuberger

The Battle of Britain by Quentin Reynolds

and other titles

ALLABOUT BOOKS, Random House, New York

All About Dinosaurs by Roy Chapman Andrews
All About Radio and Television by Jack Gould
All About the Sea by Ferdinand C. Lane
All About Volcanoes and Earthquakes by Frederick H. Pough and other titles

GATEWAY BOOKS, Random House, New York

Famous Airports of the World by Ansel Talbert
Famous Bridges of the World by D. B. Steinman
Famous Harbors of the World by Eugene F. Moran, Sr. and other titles

Many miscellaneous publications from the field of children's literature are appropriate for use with remedial readers. The list below merely suggests books from this area which are interesting to high school boys and girls and at the same time do not present problems in reading mechanics.

River Ranch by Doris Gates
Album of Horses by Marguerite Henry
The Moffats by Eleanor Estes
Minn of the Mississippi by Holling C. Holling
Homer Price by Robert McCloskey
Doak Walker, Three-Time All American by Dorothy Bracken
Boom Town Boy by Lois Lenski
Pecos Bill and Lightning by Leigh Peck
Susan's Year by Siddie Jo Johnson
The Matchlock Gun by Walter Edmonds

On the Banks of Plum Creek by Laura Ingalls Wilder
Abraham Lincoln by Clara Judson
Martin Luther by May McNeer and Lynd Ward
Lightning and Thunder by Herbert S. Zim

Ben and Me by Robert Lawson
The Horse Family by Inez Hogan

The third source of easy reading material can be found in the simplified, adapted, or shortened classics. While there is a difference of opinion concerning the use of these "write-downs," many teachers have found their use a means of providing assignments more nearly adapted to the student's reading level. The availability of rewrites at this time is almost limitless as the following list will indicate:

THE TREASURE BOOKS SERIES, Steck Co., Austin, Texas

Gulliver's Travels
Rip Van Winkle and The Legend of Sleepy Hollow
Kidnapped

SIMPLIFIED CLASSICS (for grades seven to twelve), Scott, Foresman, Chicago

Around the World in Eighty Days
David Copperfield
Huckleberry Finn
Lorna Doone
Silas Marner
Treasure Island
 and other titles

EVERYREADER SERIES, Webster Publishing Co., St. Louis, Mo.

Juarez, Hero of Mexico
Tale of Two Cities
Cases of Sherlock Holmes
Count of Monte Cristo

Gold Bug and Other Stories
Men of Iron
Ivanhoe
Ben Hur

PRIXIE BOOK SERIES OF JUVENILE
CLASSICS, John C. Winston Co.,
Philadelphia

Alice in Wonderland
Treasure Island
Heidi
Tom Sawyer

FAMOUS STORY SERIES, Benjamin H.
Sanborn and Co., Chicago

Robinson Crusoe
Lemuel Gulliver in Lilliput Land
Treasure Island
The Three Musketeers
Moby Dick
The Deerslayer
and other titles

Finally, one of the most useful professional guides for the high school teacher in locating reading material is the graded reading list. Several of the standard lists are given below.

Books for You, A High School Reading List. Chicago: National Council of Teachers of English, 1951
Carpenter, Helen McCracken. *Gateways to American History.* New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1942

Durrell, Donald D., and Sullivan, Helen B. *High Interest-Low Vocabulary Booklist.* Boston: Boston University, 1950

Strang, Ruth M.; Gilbert, Christine H.; and Scoggin, Margaret C. *Gateways to Readable Books; An Annotated Graded List of Books in Many Fields for Adolescents Who Find Reading Difficult*, 2nd Ed. New York: H. W. Wilson Co., 1952

Wurtz, Conrad; Sindt, Doris; and Keyser, Margaret. *A Bibliography of Reading Lists for Retarded Readers.* Iowa City: State University of Iowa Extension Bulletin, State University of Iowa, 1949

Dunn, Anita E.; Jackman, Mabel E.; Bush, Bernice C.; Newton, Roy J. *Fare for the Reluctant Reader.* Albany, New York; State University of New York, New York State College for Teachers

Another guide for the teacher is the juvenile book review. Aiding the teacher in the selection of recently published books, splendid reviews of current literature for adolescents appear in many newspapers as a regular feature of the book review section. Furthermore, publications such as *Library Journal*, *Saturday Review of Literature*, *Parents' Magazine* and *The Horn Book*, furnish news of books for children and youth. Lastly, the school and public librarians render an invaluable service to teachers.

Thus, with the help of textbooks, juvenile trade books, adapted classics, and professional guides the high school teacher can create interest in reading by providing his students with numerous easy reading selections that are both exciting and rewarding.

Free Booklist

An annotated list of books for supplementary reading, Kindergarten through Grade 9, is available from the Children's Reading Service, 1078 St. John's Place, Brooklyn 13, New York.

What Other Magazines Are Saying About the Teaching of Reading

*Reviewed by Muriel Potter
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"What Research Says About Teaching Reading." Arthur I. Gates. *NEA Journal*, October, 1953.

This article does not describe or refer to particular research projects, but gives briefly the most important implications of research findings in reading as a process and in the teaching of reading skills. Some of the points stressed are these:

Reading skills do not develop naturally, but are the result of teacher guidance in helping children read in the situations where such skills are most useful. Thus every teacher has the responsibility for teaching reading as well as subject matter. Reading is a complex process in which many technics are needed, and it is needed in many out-of-school situations as well as in school. Skills in out-of-school reading must be learned, just as are those perhaps used in school. The school can facilitate the child's development of such reading skills by teaching the reading processes required in extra-school activities as well as those needed for academic success.

Dr. Gates points out that superior learners profit from reading guidance, though they are given relatively little help with reading skills because it is assumed that good academic achievement cannot exist without good reading. This assumption is not correct.

A superior learner may be a relatively inefficient reader.

Reading abilities grow from level to level of complexity, and success at any level requires mastery of the earlier ones. Reading and thinking skills such as summarizing, outlining and judging, begin with the reading process at the earliest levels and develop as the child's intellect develops. Sometimes one skill is emphasized in school at the cost of others equally important, as when overemphasis on the contribution of single letters to the ability to recognize unfamiliar words results in inability to attend to longer word parts. Sometimes speed is emphasized at the cost of comprehension.

Reading is used for many purposes, and each purpose may suggest a different approach to the reading material. The organization of material influences an efficient reader's approach to it. Therefore, it is impossible to reduce the teaching of reading to a few simple formulas. Ability to vary speed in accordance with the difficulty of the content and in accordance with the purpose for which reading is done, ability to select reading materials to satisfy a variety of reading purposes, ability to select from reading material ideas which are needed for a particular use, are among the basal reading technics which are combined by the successful reader.

"Phonics Study and Word Analysis—II." Paul Witty. *Elementary English*, October, 1953.

In his second article—the first appeared in this journal in May, 1953—Dr. Witty analyzes the recommendations of a number of nationally-known specialists with regard to the teaching of phonics. There is general emphasis on the necessity for teaching phonetic analysis as an accessory part of the general thought-getting activity in reading, but points of view and recommendations differ. There is agreement, however, on the necessity of children's being mature enough to undertake the acquisition of phonetic skills.

Much of the article describes different systems of teaching phonetics and describes a number of publications, particularly workbooks, especially prepared for this purpose.

* * *

"Classroom Problems in the Teaching of Reading." Kathleen B. Hester. *Elementary School Journal*, October, 1953.

This article summarizes the results of a survey of opinion carried on over a period of five years among teachers of reading. These educators were asked, "What changes in today's schools do you feel are responsible for your problems in reading instruction?" Their replies were analyzed as follows:

Compulsory education keeps children in school longer regardless of school success or failure. A change in educational philosophy stresses the child's individuality and the existence of differences in development rate, and emphasizes instruction that pro-

duces growth in the individual as contrasted with earlier instruction standards to achieve a grade standard by a given age, or within a given time period. Reading is no longer defined in terms of effective oral performance alone, but as thought-getting from the printed page.

When teachers were asked to name the difficulties they meet in teaching reading, the problems listed covered the entire field, with the largest number in the category *basic instruction in the classroom*. Named less frequently and in descending order of importance, were remedial reading, readiness for reading, reading in content subjects and evaluation of pupil growth. In these results, Dr. Hester finds evidence of a growing concern for the teaching of reading in the classroom, and a decreasing interest in remedial reading as a special type of treatment. There appeared little concern about teaching reading in content subjects and even less about pupil evaluation. These results raise the question—is there little concern because no problem exists or because teachers are not sufficiently aware of an existing problem?

* * *

"The Effect of Vocabulary-Building on Reading Skills." Rachel S. Sutton. *Elementary School Journal*, October, 1953.

A special program of study was planned for a group of third-grade children, of intelligence below average, who were pupils at a county school. During a period of about four months, this program stressed intensive study of words through word exercises, building of individual word

lists, special work on the elimination of word confusions, participation in discussion about favorite books and stories, emphasis and guidance in the use of the library, and experiences in science.

Particular attention was given to using the dictionary, matching words and definitions, and making word lists for special attention, playing word games, and using reading functionally in directions and signs. Practice was given in deriving meanings from context. As a result of this intensive program, 25 of these 36 children learned to use the dictionary successfully. The number of books read by members of the group ranged from six to fifty-four.

The experimenter believes that the success of such a program would be even greater with children of average intelligence.

* * *

"Reading in the Content Areas." Trevor K. Serviss. *Elementary English*, October, 1953.

In this interesting article Mr. Serviss, Editor-in-Chief of D. C. Heath and Company, discusses the influence of children's book choices upon their success in reading. He points out the wealth of worthwhile materials available for parallel reading in social studies areas, and puts forward his personal criterion for selecting prospective teachers: First, does the teacher know children? Second, does he know children's books?

He urges the bringing together of the "right book" and the "right child," and suggests that the right book is found when, among other things, it is one which satisfies a child's

needs and interests and is suited to his reading ability; when its content meets high standards for authenticity, literary quality, and attractiveness; when it tells a good story and the characters are "alive." Children who, guided in their selection, learn to enjoy such materials are developing an appreciation of good literature and an awareness of the many purposes served by reading it. They learn to discriminate and to choose the good. The provision of reading materials "abundant, diversified, interesting and easy" from sources old and new, says Mr. Serviss, helps children to accept responsibility for selecting their own reading wisely.

Using many examples from children's literature as illustrations, Mr. Serviss suggests that youth is the time when wholesome attitudes are most easily learned, and that reading can make important contributions to social and personal adjustment.

* * *

"Periodical Reading Courses: Their Place and Function in American Education." Earl L. Vance. *Education*, October, 1953.

The author, a teacher in the school of journalism at Florida State University, has been teaching "current periodical reading" for over twenty years. Since adults spend more time in reading newspapers and magazines than in reading books, he advocates that education assume the responsibility for teaching effective reading of newspapers and periodicals. Since periodicals are universally read, he stresses the probability that they have a powerful effect on thinking, voting and ways of living.

Mr. Vance says that college students are frequently arrested at the level of the high-school freshman when their skill in periodical reading is considered. Since reading habits are formed mainly in the later school years, it seems to him unfortunate that schools give little guidance in the formation of tastes in periodical reading. He reviews the results of a number of studies on what people want to read and what they actually do read. He quotes statements of well-known educators to the effect that the development of standards and tastes in reading is neglected during the years of high-school attendance. Finally he describes his own procedures in a program of periodical reading for college students who, he believes, are not very different from readers at the upper high-school levels.

Mr. Vance advocates prescribed, regular reading to be carried on over a prolonged period. He selects the periodicals which he considers valuable for the formation of discriminating taste in periodical reading in order to acquaint his students with the good, if not the best. Materials and techniques for putting this program into practice at high-school levels will necessarily be worked out by each instructor, using materials at the maturity level of each student. The effect would be to stress current problems and events, to provide readers with a method of keeping abreast of the times and our rapidly changing culture, and to develop good generalized reading habits for adult reading.

"What Is Communicated?" Ruth Strang. *Educational Forum*, November, 1953.

This article describes a study of the ability to understand reading materials. The subjects were 150 seventh-grade children in a public junior high school. The method was to ask the children to read three paragraphs from health and social studies textbooks and one Lear limerick, and to write free responses to the question (for the paragraphs) "What did you get out of the paragraph you have just read? Tell all you remember." (for the limerick) "What does this mean to you? Tell everything you thought of as you read it."

When the answers were analyzed and classified, a large number of children failed to get the general idea of each paragraph. Dr. Strang suggests several possible explanations for this failure. She points out that the children apparently had not learned to take time preliminary to reading to decide what kind of selection each paragraph was, and how it should be read. They showed little skill in recognizing main ideas or sequences and patterns of thought. They seemed to find details most important, and attention to details distracted their attention from main ideas. Few could write their ideas well.

Dr. Strang says that this lack of reading skills is the result of deficiencies in reading instruction. She writes in a lively and interesting manner which is rarely found in accounts of research investigations and cites many instances of children's responses upon which she comments.

"Mass Media and Children—an International View." Josette Frank. *Child Study*, Fall, 1952.

This article reports briefly comments made during an international conference organized by the University of Milan, and sponsored by many agencies, including UNESCO. Among the topics discussed were censorship of materials written for children, the positive and negative values of comics, the potentialities of the use of radio for the social education of children, and procedures in several countries where control systems are in operation for the legal regulation of radio for children. This thought-provoking article describes the many ways in which points of view differ from country to country. For example, parts of some Disney films were found by European viewers to be frightening to children, while parts of films called indecent in this country might not even attract comment in Europe.

* * *

"Factors that Influence Language Growth." Dorothea McCarthy, Charlotte Wells, Ruth G. Strickland, Muriel Crosby. *The National Council of Teachers of English*, 1952 and 1953.

This bulletin is a compilation of four articles which have appeared in the journal *Elementary English*. Since reading growth takes place as a part of total growth in the language arts, teachers should find very useful the summaries of research findings and the implications for teaching which are gathered in this pamphlet.

The first article, "The Child's Equipment for Language Growth," discusses the physiology of speech and the stages of language and speech

development, parallel development in the areas of vision and eye-hand coordination, in vocabulary and in comprehension of language. The other three articles discuss home influences, school influences and community influences on language development. Each article is followed by a good bibliography.

* * *

"Television and Children's Reading." Robert Lewis Shayon. *The Horn Book*, April, 1953.

This lively and refreshingly different article discusses the influences which make television what it is, and suggests changes in our ways of responding to it.

Mr. Shayon points out that television has not decreased the sale of comics. Thus it appears that television and reading need not be mutually exclusive. Television may even be used to encourage reading and better reading tastes. He describes a program of action to bring about this desirable state of affairs. He urges us to "think about television, not just stare at it." He suggests such activities as joint selection by adults and children of programs to be viewed, joint viewing of such programs and joint evaluation. His suggestions are specific and reasonable. Recommended for teachers, parents and all other adults.

* * *

"Schools Can Change Grouping Practices" (unsigned) and "Grouping in the Classroom." Edith M. Thomas. *Childhood Education*, October, 1953.

These two short articles appear as part of a section on the general topic of grouping in elementary education

programs. "Grouping in the Classroom" presents concrete examples and discusses such problems as labeling groups and planning with a group. "Schools Can Change Grouping Practices" describes programs of schools in Virginia, Utah, Illinois and Wisconsin. It gives accounts of procedures, problems met in school organization and in public relations and successful solutions to these problems.

* * *

"A Report on the Phonetic Method of Teaching Children to Read." Rev. John B. McDowell. *Catholic Educational Review*, October, 1953.

This article describes a research study carried on in the Diocese of Pittsburgh. Its purpose was to compare the reading skills of children taught reading by a phonetic method with the achievement of others taught by a program using phonetic training "as a subsidiary word attack skill . . . introduced gradually and developed through analysis of meaningful material"—a combined method.

Each group comprised children in five different schools who were at the fourth-grade level at the time of comparison. The average class size was 45. Teachers were unacquainted with the purpose of the study. Only children whose learning experiences had been continuously and consistently with one method or the other were considered.

The Iowa Silent Reading Test and the Metropolitan Achievement Battery were used. On every section of the Iowa Silent Reading test, except Directed Reading, the children taught by the combined method (meaning, with accessory phonics) ob-

tained scores superior to those in the Phonetics group, i.e. were superior in Word Meanings, Rate, Paragraph Meaning, and Use of the Index. The group taught by phonetics alone was better at Alphabetizing, however.

Scores on the Metropolitan Achievement Battery were also higher for the children taught by the combined (phonetics-meaning) program, but not significantly so. There was no difference in arithmetic scores, and the children taught by the phonetics method alone were superior in spelling.

Dr. McDowell discusses the probable reasons for these differences, and stresses the value of mental set to obtain meaning, which he believes accounts for the differences in reading performance between the groups. His article is well-written and teacher oriented. It also provides a useful source of materials for the evaluation of phonics instruction.

* * *

"Interest—A Key to Reading Retardation." Delwyn G. Schubert. *Elementary English*, December 1953.

The writer points out that dislike of reading is a conditioned reaction, and that whatever its cause, it is difficult to overcome. For children who dislike reading, it is important, he feels, to provide books which are on or slightly below their level of reading ability, and particularly books that relate to their present interests, no matter how immature. The author also touches upon the necessity for a good relationship between teacher and child as a basic element in the success of any reading improvement program.

"An Individualized Reading Program for the Elementary School." N. Dean Evans. *Elementary School Journal*, November 1953.

This article describes and evaluates a method of teaching reading which the writer has used in his own classes. Brief comments are made on the materials needed and the sources from which they can easily be obtained. Procedures for administration and for recording are described. A list of activities is given in the order in which they should be conducted, and each activity is described in detail. Special attention is given to the conference, which is the basic technique for individualizing the reading program. The writer ends this short, well-written article with a list of the advantages of such a program, from the points of view of both teacher and pupils. A set of comments made by sixth-grade pupils who had participated in this program is quoted. All the comments were favorable and touched specifically on many different aspects of the total reading experience.

* * *

"Let's Read to the Children." Herbert J. Farris, *N.E.A. Journal*, December, 1953.

This short article urges the revival of oral reading as a means of improving instruction in the classroom. He makes the following points: (1) Choose a regular, restful period for all. (2) Read with enthusiasm. (3) Start where they are. He suggests that children be allowed to choose the story which initiates the program, in order to motivate good listening.

The purposes of oral reading of this type are: (1) to stimulate inter-

est in silent reading, (2) to teach, and (3) to motivate art and other activities. Anecdotes help in the clarification of the writer's points.

* * *

"Stimulating Leisure Reading." Charles M. DeWitt. *Elementary English*, December, 1953.

The writer briefly describes a technique he devised to stimulate the interest of elementary school pupils in leisure-time reading. Involving the use, preferably, of a classroom library, the procedure stresses the evaluation of books by means of periodic voting—what might be called a popularity poll. Devices for increasing the popularity of books are panel discussions, oral reports, dramatizations, illustration by drawings, and reading aloud by the teacher of selections from books which are worthy but seldom read.

* * *

"Some Aspects of Verbalism." J. Conrad Seegers. *Elementary English*, November, 1953.

This lively article begins by pointing out that difficulties in understanding a communication, verbal or written, exist wherever one person tries to transmit a thought to another. He quotes from Flesch's *The Art of Plain Talk* a number of anecdotes in which understanding difficulties occurred in entirely unforeseen circumstances. He points out that much reading material is written for the specialized audience (or readership) and may be unintelligible to the non-specialist. Coming down to cases, he points out that grammar is usually taught in what may be called a "verbalistic" manner, and explains his meaning fully. He continues with in-

stances of the ways in which textbooks for middle-grade children frequently assume a background of specialized knowledge—for example, in the statement that the Appalachians are “old” mountains.

Paraphrasing Mortimer Adler's *How to Read a Book*, he continues with a set of suggestions as to how one must read in order to read effectively. Reading informational material requires not only attention to the facts presented but to the motives of the writer, the general outline, the assumptions made in the presentation and the use of specialized terminology. “Even graduate students,” he says, “are frequently satisfied if they can reproduce what a book says without formulating independent judgments

concerning it. This is verbalistic.”

Fiction and poetry also require special mental sets and special vocabularies. Again Dr. Seegers cites authorities to draw up a clear and positive statement of what good reading means in these areas. He concludes with eight suggestions for helping pupils to avoid verbalism in reading.

* * *

“Make Thinking a Game for Your Children.” D. L. Fitch. *Better Homes and Gardens*, December, 1953.

This article, written from a parent's point of view, offers many suggestions which teachers may use in conferring with parents. It describes ways of enriching children's background and developing wholesome and desirable attitudes of curiosity

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and interest about the world of experience, real and vicarious. The procedure was developed through use in the home, but the same kind of encouragement to question, to look for and find answers, and to use them, is the teacher's goal in working with children in school. Readable, anecdotal, *challenging*.

* * *

"I Remember Henry." Katherine B.

Peavy. *N.E.A. Journal*, January, 1954.

A moving case history of a child who had to learn in school about most of the things we as teachers take for granted that children have at home. Written by a teacher who knows that for each child the level of aspiration must be different, and that success can not always be measured by a battery of tests. Only one page!

Interesting Books for the Reading Teacher

Edited by Nova Nestrick

Reading Editor

The MacMillan Company

IRVING H. ANDERSON AND WALTER F. DEARBORN, *The Psychology of Teaching Reading*. The Ronald Press Company, New York, 1952. 382 p.

The preface to *The Psychology of Teaching Reading* opens with the statement that the "book is addressed to the problem of teaching children to read." If "by children" is meant young children who are just beginning to learn to read, then the preface gives a more correct picture of the content of the volume than does the title. Except in their discussion of eye movements, the authors rarely go beyond the second grade to find the reading problems on which they collect research data.

This, then, is a book on beginning reading. In this limited area it does

an excellent job of discussing the major questions which arise. This is done mainly by the use of the experimental literature in reading and related fields. The authors do much more than merely summarize these studies. They use them pro and con and even to re-phrase the questions if the research shows that the problems need to be approached in a different way.

The book takes up the question as to when a child should be started on the actual reading of symbols—reading readiness—and even raises the point that, according to the evidence, some five- and six-year-olds may not be ready for reading-readiness training. The question of individual differences in reading ability is extended to include differences in reading

growth and of how these differences may be determined. The authors lean rather heavily towards Olson's concept of the relationship of reading growth to organismic growth, without adequate evidence to back up the preference. However, perhaps it is only fair for research reviewers to give the challenger in the field a somewhat favored amount of space when the thoroughly entrenched champion has shown obvious weaknesses. There is no question of the fact that for years in school and clinic practice, Mental Age has been used to predict what Reading Age should be. Years ago this concept was successfully challenged at the point of reading readiness. Now Olson and others are challenging this concept along the full scale of reading growth. Anderson and Dearborn emphasize this new research as worthy of being made use of in educational practice.

In the actual teaching of beginning reading the authors compare the alphabet, phonetic word, phrase, sentence, and story or paragraph methods. They point out the pitfalls of each method when it is used as the only method and recommend a combination of all of these methods for maximum learning. To bring this recommendation home to their readers and to give a more gestalt view of reading teaching than can be gotten from a summation of the conclusions of research studies, the authors give a detailed description of a real teacher's first-grade reading program as it extended over the full year, using three different children as the focal points of the description. I am sure that parents as well as teach-

ers will thoroughly appreciate this chapter.

Bertha B. Friedman
Department of Education
Queens College
Flushing, N. Y.

PAUL WITTY, *How to Become a Better Reader*. Science Research Associates, Chicago, Illinois, 1953.

How to Become a Better Reader is a significant book on an important phase of reading instruction for adults. The individual who chooses to use this book will find a means of increasing his ability as a reader, through a step-by-step procedure which has been carefully planned and systematically organized and which he may follow at his own rate of speed.

In the one volume, twenty basic lessons present the essential aspects of a good reading program. For example, reading needs, eye movements, rate of speed, different types of reading, vocabulary building, location of materials, are included.

This publication can best be described as a primer for persons vaguely aware of a lack of sufficient reading mastery and fumbling about for a way to help themselves. The illustrative material is varied and likely to hold the interest of the diversified group of readers to whom the book is directed. The book is written in simple, clear and specific language. The format is attractive and the type selected may encourage the reader who has been discouraged in the past.

David I. Goldman
Education Department
Brooklyn College, New York City

"Teaching Reading." Arthur I. Gates. National Education Association. 1953. Single copies 25¢. Make checks payable N.E.A. 1201 Sixteenth St., N. W., Washington 6, D.C.

Dr. Gates' pamphlet begins with a concise account of the importance of reading in modern living.

After summarizing the research in various areas, he writes at length of the changes in instructional procedure in the recent decades, principally the trend of teaching by "wholes rather than parts." He says that "parts take on full meaning only in the light of the whole." He illustrates this point by citing the difference between "first surveying a whole selection" and then returning to a study of the parts of the selection as opposed to the technique of first reading intensively paragraph by paragraph. He voices the objection research has made to isolated drills and explains the objection. He also states the position of recent thinking concerning ready-made materials for this purpose and says that they may be used to advantage, if used in a flexible fashion. They are not a substitute, however, for the "insight and guidance of the teacher." He again states the importance of the teacher understanding "what abilities must be learned and how to see and provide what a particular child should know."

Grace Allen

Supervisor of Student Teaching
Anne Reno Institute

"Improving Children's Learning Ability." Harry N. Rivlin, Science

Research Associates, Chicago. 1953. 48 p.

If you have forgotten why you use some of the classroom techniques that you use, if you want to review and reassemble your ideas about how children learn, this is a book for you. In keeping with the purpose of the series, which is designed for parents as well as teachers, the booklet is written in simple, non-technical language and with a great deal of charm. The psychological principles are sound and the practical suggestions for both parents and teachers are specific and practical. Reading teachers will find it particularly helpful.

Donald Snugg

State University Teachers College
Oswego, New York

LINDBERG, LUCILLE. *The Democratic Classroom: A Guide for Teachers*. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1954. Pp. 182.

Here is a book as practical in content as galoshes in January, vital and vivid, and revealing in "the how to do it" of "group process." If put into practice the procedures suggested in this book would revolutionize the sterile educational patterns prevalent in so many public schools today. It is a book for those teachers who are eager themselves to break through their own crystallized, uncreative patterns, and who are groping for more genuine relationships with and among children, between teachers and parents, school and community.

The author points out that certain symbols of democracy now being

taught in our schools are all too often substitutes for learning experiences in democratic living. Among these she lists role playing, conduct produced by school rules made by teachers, routine patriotic observances, reciting of creeds, formalized teaching, etc. The difficulty is that children are taught these things in isolation from the democratic process.

The teacher's role includes encouraging children to explore their environment and to become selective in their use of materials, helping them to discover the importance of people in the community as sources for information and help, helping them to improve their relationship with other classes, helping them work together, helping them organize school services, etc.

The unique contribution of this book is that it shows how children can become tremendously excited and appreciative of "group process" as the way for democracy to work.

Lilian L. Stevens
The City College
New York City

HYMES, JAMES L. *Effective Home-School Relations*. New York: Prentice Hall, 1953. Pp. 257. \$3.50.

For you who are weary of toiling through pages of "pedagogy," a rare treat awaits you in Dr. Hymes' new book, *Effective Home-School Relations*. He speaks in a language so clear and comprehensible that one re-reads many paragraphs, not in search of obscure meanings but to savor again his vigorous down-to-earth approach to parent-teacher relationships.

Much rich resource material is in-

cluded in this book such as the names of films, bulletins, books and descriptions of good discussion techniques. Both parents and teachers will find this book most helpful.

Edna Ashley
Assistant Principal
Glen Head Elementary School
Glen Head, New York

BURROWS, ALVINA TREUT; FEREBEE, JUNE D.; JACKSON, DORIS C.; and SAUNDERS, DOROTHY O. *They All Want to Write*. New York: Prentice-Hall, 1952. Rev. Ed. 240 p.

Certainly every teacher in the elementary school will agree with the authors that writing can play a significant part in the child's development. From the "writing" of the young child who seeks the opportunity to dictate the story his picture tells to the practical and personal writing necessary for the free flow of ideas among older children, writing is and should be a continuous pattern of growth.

They All Want to Write presents a step-by-step account of four successful teachers' approach to writing, with samples of the children's writing and the background material to help other teachers find the same joy and satisfaction through their writing experiences with children.

Elizabeth Hamblen
Stratford Avenue School
Garden City, New York

VOTE NOW for new officers and directors of the International Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction. Ballot on page 255.

Spotlight on Reading at Atlantic City Meetings

At many of the Atlantic City sessions of the A.A.S.A. and allied organizations, the spotlight was turned on the teaching of reading. Many gave encouraging reports of current methods of teaching reading. But some were strongly critical of today's practices.

Probably one of the most controversial sessions was that devoted to the topic "The Superintendent's Responsibility to the Three R's." From the tremendous number of superintendents crowded into Room B of the Auditorium on February 15th, there seemed to be evidence that many wanted guidance.

On this occasion Dr. George Reavis, former Curriculum Director of the Cincinnati Public Schools, made a strong plea for definite periods to be set aside for reading—at least two periods per day preferably three, in Grades One and Two. He was severely critical of what he referred to as "the perpetuation of the one-room school" with pupils of many reading levels in a single class. In its place he called for the practice of grouping children according to the instruction they need, denouncing what he termed "homogeneous grouping by chronological age."

In marked contrast were the recommendations of Dr. Paul Witty and the panel members speaking at the February 16th session sponsored by the International Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction. Here the emphasis was on meeting the needs of the individual child in a flex-

ible program which would be guided by the progress and interests of children from day to day rather than a rigidly established schedule regulated by the hands of the clock.

Dr. Arthur Gates, one of the panel members, outlined in some detail the kind of inter-related activities which can be developed in a broad language arts program. Others on the panel were Dr. Emmett A. Betts, Dr. Ruth Strang, Mrs. Elsie Stahl, Dr. Ethel Maney, Miss Nancy Larrick.

At one of the discussion groups of the Elementary Principals' Workshop, reading was again in the spotlight. On this occasion considerable time was spent on a discussion of the materials which can be used effectively to arouse children's interest.

School Librarians

Indirectly the school librarians meeting in joint session with the school administrators, put the spotlight on reading as they discussed plans for school libraries. Mrs. Dilla MacBean, Director of School Libraries for the City of Chicago, reported that only one-fourth of the floor plans in the architectural exhibit in the Convention Hall provided for school libraries. One school for 500 pupils was said to include a combined library and music room only 12 by 23 feet. Another shows a library that can only be reached by going through the cafeteria.

Dr. Virgil Rogers speaking to this group, made a plea for adequately equipped school libraries as a necessity in a good school program and the greatest aid in teaching.

Membership Grows Steadily in the I.C.I.R.I.

According to the February 14th report of the Executive Secretary, there are now 3,845 paid members of the International Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction. This is more than double the paid membership a year ago.

In a state-by-state report, Dr. Cleland showed that New York has the greatest number of members—492. Pennsylvania is second with 485; Illinois is third with 237; followed in order by Ohio, 177; South Carolina, 157; West Virginia, 149; New Jersey, 126; Washington, 123; Maryland, 109; California, 107.

Forty-Three Local Reading Councils

Dr. Donald L. Cleland, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the I.C.I.R.I., reports there are now forty-three local reading councils working actively. In addition to those listed in the February *READING TEACHER*, the following councils are affiliated.

Allentown Group, Allentown, Pennsylvania

Centerville Council, Centerville, Maryland

Chattanooga Council, Chattanooga, Tennessee

Hamilton County Council, Chattanooga, Tennessee

Kern County Council, Bakersfield, California

Kingwood Council, Kingwood, West Virginia

Mesa Reading Council, Mesa, Arizona

Canada has a total membership of 454 in the various provinces.

Other countries represented in the membership list are Africa, France, and Norway.

As further encouragement, Dr. Cleland reports a growing number of schools and libraries which are subscribing to *THE READING TEACHER*. There are now 208 such subscribers.

Life Membership

Life Members of the I.C.I.R.I. now total twelve. Dues for such membership are \$50, payable to Donald L. Cleland, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Reading Laboratory, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Midwest City Council, Midwest City, Oklahoma

Neshanic Council, Somerset County, Neshanic, New Jersey

Orangeburg Council, Orangeburg, South Carolina

Ottawa Council, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Spokane Council, Spokane, Washington

Tempe Council, Tempe, Arizona
Westchester Reading Council, White Plains, New York

Painesville City Reading Council, Painesville, Ohio

Orange Belt Council, Ontario, California

Information about formation of local councils may be obtained from Dr. Donald L. Cleland, Reading Laboratory, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Nominations for 1954-55 and General Assembly

NOMINATIONS for the new Board of Directors and plans for the 1954 Assembly of the I.C.I.R.I. were two of the big items of business considered by the officers and directors of the I.C.I.R.I. meeting in Atlantic City, February 14 and 16.

H. Alan Robinson, chairman of the Elections Committee, announced the following slate:

For President-Elect: Dr. William S. Gray, University of Chicago

For Directors: Dr. Walter Barbe of the University of Chattanooga, Dr. David H. Russell of the University of California, and Dr. LaVerne Strong of the Connecticut State Department of Education. (Two directors are to be elected.)

The ballots, printed on page 255 of the April *READING TEACHER*, are to be mailed to Mr. Robinson before May 1, 1954. Announcement of the results will be made at the meeting of the General Assembly, May 8th.

General Assembly Plans

Dr. Albert J. Harris, Past President of the I.C.I.R.I., announced plans for the General Assembly to be held in New York City. Tentative arrangements are being made by the committee for an all-day meeting.

The morning session will be devoted to discussion of problems of reading instruction. This program is being arranged with the cooperation of Dr. William H. Bristow, Director of the Bureau of Curriculum Research, of the New York City Board of Education.

After a luncheon meeting, the business session of the Assembly will be held, followed by a meeting of the boards of directors.

Detailed information about the Assembly will be sent to local councils officers. Arrangements for the Assembly are being made by the four councils in the New York area.

New Amendment Proposed for I.C.I.R.I. Constitution

At the Atlantic City meeting of the Board of Directors on February 16, 1954, it was proposed that the number of Directors be expanded from four to six persons and that their term of office be extended from two to three years. This seems desirable because of the expanding membership in the organization and the need for greater continuity of experience of board members.

For these reasons, the Board of Directors recommends the following amendment to the Constitution and By-Laws which will be put to a vote at the meeting of the Assembly to be held on May 8, 1954, in New York City:

Article IV, Section 6, to be amended as follows:

"There shall be six Directors, two elected each year for three-year terms. The Directors shall serve as voting members of the Board of Directors."

At the Assembly at which this section is amended as above, the terms of the four directors in office and the two newly elected directors shall become three-year terms.

Vote Now for New Reading Council Officers

Members of the I.C.I.R.I. are urged to fill in this ballot and send it in at once to the Elections Chairman

EACH MEMBER of the International Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction is entitled to vote for new council officers.

According to the constitution, a President-Elect is chosen each year. At the end of the year, he automatically becomes President of the I.C.I.R.I. Margaret A. Robinson, President-Elect for 1953-54, will become President for the year 1954-55.

The out-going President remains a member of the Executive Board for the year following his term as President. Thus, Dr. Paul Witty, President for 1953-54, will serve on the board for the year 1954-55. Two new board members are elected each year.

The following ballot is drawn up in accordance with the regulations of the I.C.I.R.I. Ballots should be mailed at once to H. Alan Robinson, Elections Chairman, to reach his office before May 1, 1954.

The names of the candidates chosen by this ballot will be presented by the Elections Committee at the annual meeting of the Assembly to be held on Saturday, May 8, 1954, in New York City.

Names of additional candidates for office may be written in.

For President-Elect (Vote for One)

—DR. WILLIAM S. GRAY
Director of Research in Reading
University of Chicago

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

For Executive Board (Vote for two)

—DR. WALTER BARBE
Director, Reading Clinic
University of Chattanooga
Chattanooga, Tennessee

—DR. DAVID RUSSELL
School of Education
University of California
Berkley, California

—DR. LA VERNE STRONG
Supv. of Elementary Education
State Dept. of Education
Hartford, Connecticut

.....
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Valley Stream, N. Y.

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PITTSBURGH 13, PENNSYLVANIA

☐ I hereby apply for membership in the International Council for the Improvement of Reading Instruction and enclose \$2.50 as my annual membership dues for the year, \$2.00 of which is for subscription to THE READING TEACHER.

☐ I enclose \$2.00 for the charter fee for a local council of the I.C.I.R.I. along with the names of five paid-up sponsoring members.

☐ Please send me information about forming a local council of the I.C.I.R.I.

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City.....Zone.....State.....

Please make checks payable to Donald L. Cleland, Executive Secretary-Treasurer.